

Community Age-Friendly Priorities, Issues, and Challenges

Age-Friendly Photography Study: Summary of Discussion Group Dauphin, Manitoba

The following is a summary of one of several discussion groups held with seniors in Manitoba as part of a larger program of research on age-friendliness. In February of 2008, seniors from Dauphin's Multi-Purpose Seniors Centre were invited to be part of a research study about age-friendly communities through the Centre on Aging at the



University of Manitoba. As part of the project, seniors took photographs within their community to show age-friendly features and barriers to age-friendliness. In June of 2008, the group of seniors came together to talk about age-friendly priorities, issues, and challenges within their community. The following is a summary of the priorities, issues, and challenges identified by the group of seniors.

Priority 1 Improve living accommodations for seniors

Potential Actions:

- Do a needs assessment on seniors' housing
- Develop new accommodations in the community
 - Increase range of choice and affordability
- Eliminate substandard accommodations in Dauphin
- Examine housing accessibility and waiting lists
- Provide parking at seniors' housing units that offer more protection from the elements during winter



Priority 2 Improve local health care

Potential Actions:

- Address Intensive Care Unit (ICU) problems/closure at Dauphin Regional Health Centre
- Address general medical personnel issues (e.g. retention of staff)
- Address hospital infrastructure problems in Parkland area
- Lessen wait times for medical treatment
- Have seniors communicate with authorities regarding these and other health-related concerns



Priority 3 Improve traffic management related to stoplight usage, vehicle traffic movement, and pedestrian traffic

Priority 4 Address safety and security concerns of seniors - both personal safety and property security

Priority 5 Encourage ALL seniors' organizations to promote their activities for seniors

Priority 6 Improve communication between all levels of government and local people, as well as improve media role in promoting issues important to seniors

Priority 7 Communication about and promotion of Dauphin within and outside of Dauphin



Priority 8 Address sidewalk safety issues

Potential Actions:

- More promotion/advertising of the existing “Stepsafe” program
- Improve effectiveness and utilization of “Stepsafe”



Priority 9 Promote involvement of seniors within the community

Potential Actions:

- Have seniors take more action on key issues in the community

Priority 10 Promote the Dauphin Multi-Purpose Seniors Centre

Potential Actions:

- More promotion within Dauphin community
- More overall involvement by members of the Centre

General Issues in Improving Age-Friendliness in Dauphin

- ▶ Increase level of community organization around identified issues



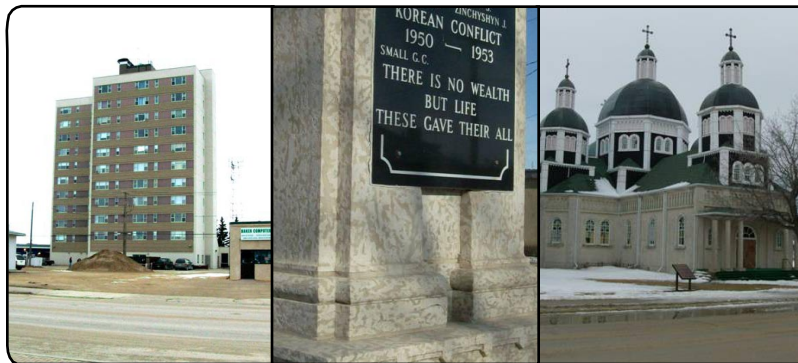
- ▶ Consider setting up Advisory Committees to report to Town Council on various issues of interest to seniors; supply the committee with some authority
- ▶ Improve laws and law enforcement on issues of security and traffic management

- ▶ Look at increasing consistency across Manitoba in relation to the standards for housing accommodations for seniors
- ▶ Investigate more options for positive activities for youth
- ▶ Develop parenting programs to assist parents
- ▶ Increase communication within the community, and between the City, businesses, and industry to improve quality of life
- ▶ Look for creative solutions to problems



Challenges to Advancing Age-Friendly Goals within Dauphin

- ▶ “Red tape” in regards to initiating change or improvement
- ▶ Older persons and residents lack knowledge or clarity about how to navigate the ‘system’ to address issues
- ▶ Engaging the City of Dauphin in seniors’ issues is key
- ▶ Costs of improvements or change can be prohibitive



- ▶ Lack of needed resources to make improvements
- ▶ Lack of cooperation between neighbouring communities to work collaboratively on issues of mutual concern
- ▶ The inclination of authorities to ‘pass the buck’; thus no change occurs
- ▶ Communication and other technology is not used optimally to increase the efficiency of health care delivery in Dauphin

- ▶ Challenges exist to getting youth/families involved in solutions to community problems (i.e. security concerns, vandalism, etc.)



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Summary Author: Dr. Toni Morris-Oswald, Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba
Team Leader: Dr. Verena Menec, Director, Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba

For more information contact:

Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba

Phone: (204) 474-8754 Fax: (204) 474-7576

E-mail: aging@umanitoba.ca

<http://www.umanitoba.ca/centres/aging>

