Building Connected Communities: Reducing Loneliness and Social Isolation in Immigrants 65+ – June 2016 – Research Update

Sheridan Centre for Elder Research

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June 2016 – Research Update

About The Centre
The Sheridan Centre for Elder Research provides a unique environment for the conduct of applied research into areas of practical concern and immediate relevance to older Canadians and their families. Located at Sheridan College’s Trafalgar Road campus in Oakville, Ontario, the Centre serves as an education and resource hub for Sheridan and the broader community.

For more information visit: elderresearch.sheridancollege.ca
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serclab.wordpress.com

Research Project
The Centre has received funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), which supports collaborative projects that address community issues through research and social innovation. The specific purpose of this three year grant is to explore new strategies to effectively reach and serve immigrants age 65+ who may be experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing loneliness and/or social isolation.

Our Partners
The Centre is working with several community partners, including Community Development Halton, Dixie-Bloor Neighbourhood Centre, India Rainbow Community Services of Peel, and the Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care. Our formal partners serve as collaborators on the research and are our vital link to the communities with which we hope to work. Aside from these formal partners, we are always interested in hearing from other community organizations that would like to participate in the research.
Our Results as of June 2016

In the first phase of the research, we have been reaching out to Halton and Peel organizations that work with older adults in general and/or older immigrants specifically. As part of this environmental scan we have collected information from 187 faith-based, mainstream, multicultural and ethno-specific organizations to build a database of relevant services. In addition, through targeted interviews with agency staff, we are learning more about the programs and strategies that exist to reach out to those who need them and to identify gaps may exist. We are continuing to add to this work over the summer and would like to hear from community groups about the work they do; if your organization would like to contribute to this phase of the research, please see the contact information on this page.

Did you know?

74% of Peel’s population aged 65+ are immigrant older adults, considerably higher than the Ontario figure (44%) and Canadian national figure (30%).

What is the difference between loneliness and social isolation?
1. Loneliness is a dynamic, subjective state. It is a condition that varies across the life course and is influenced by the socio-environmental context as well as individual personality traits.

2. Social isolation is an objective state that can be defined as a lack of social belongingness, engagement with others and social contacts. It is also multidimensional and can be related to life transitions.

Interested in being involved?

If your organization works with older adults and/or older immigrants and you are interested in participating in an agency interview, please contact:

Halton District Contact:
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Peel District Contact:
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Thank you to the organizations that have already been interviewed for our study.

References


Research team and formal partners, 2016