Building Connected Communities: Reducing Loneliness and Social Isolation in Immigrants 65+ – December 2018 – Research Update

Sheridan Centre for Elder Research

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Research Team Update

We have many exciting new updates to share with you since our last newsletter.

Professor Sirena Liladrie has taken on the role of Principle Investigator and Project Director. She brings to the project her expertise in Human Geography, Community Development and Immigration studies. Sirena has made several significant contributions since the inception of the project in 2015. She is excited to be leading the project through its final year. Some of you may remember Sirena from the Think Tank event held at Sheridan College in December 2017 where she discussed the community asset mapping project and 2016 census custom data tables.

The team also welcomes, Thomas Howe, as the new Project Coordinator. Thomas is a familiar face around the Centre for Elder Research, having contributed to several research projects over the past two years. He is a recent honours graduate from the Social Service Worker Gerontology program at Sheridan College.

Pat Spadafora and Marta Owsik have moved on to pursue other exciting career opportunities. We thank them both for their invaluable contributions to the Building Connected Communities project.

Lastly, we would like to thank our behind the scenes team members Professor Alexa Roggeveen who conducted the quantitative data analysis on the 2016 Census, and Reshma Banu who supported the qualitative analysis on the forthcoming supplemental research report looking at the importance of faith communities for immigrant older adults to reduce social isolation and loneliness.

The Building Connected Communities Research Team at Sheridan Creates 2018

Sirena Liladrie - Research Director
Lia Tsotsos - SCER Director
Thomas Howe - Project Coordinator
Laura Yang - Interaction Design/Research
Community Engagement

Our team has been hard at work this fall, sharing our knowledge and the results of our research with the community.

Lia kicked things off with a research poster presentation at CAG the Canadian Association on Gerontology conference which took place from October 18-20th at in Vancouver, BC.

On October 24th Sirena, Thomas and Laura presented the research and toolkit at Sheridan Creates the annual Sheridan College Conference of Scholars, Creators and Innovators.

The following week on October 29th Sirena and Thomas presented at the OACAO 2018 Aging Well Conference which took place at the Hilton Meadowvale as part of the annual OACAO Aging Well Conference in Mississauga, Ontario. This was a joint presentation with Wendy Caceres-Speakman of Rexdale Community Health Centre.

Toolkit, SOURCE and Upcoming Pilot

We are excited to announce that the Interactive Maps and Data Sheets are now available online on SOURCE - Sheridan Scholarly Output and Research Creative Excellence. SOURCE will host all of the Toolkit resources on their online educational commons and can be accessed easily at the link below.

https://source.sheridancollege.ca/centres_elder_building_connected_communities/

The Toolkit will include a collection of resources designed to help users better understand and address social isolation and loneliness for immigrant older adults living in Peel and Halton. These tools are intended for anyone in the community who interacts or works with older adults and anyone who might be in a position to either identify and/or provide support to someone who might be at risk of social isolation/loneliness including staff at community organizations, faith leaders, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, business owners or community volunteers.

We will be working with our community partner organizations in the coming months to pilot and test the efficacy of our Toolkit resources. This pilot project will be taking place during the months of January and February in 2019.

Our goal is to have the completed Toolkit up on SOURCE by April 2019.
The interactive maps and data sheets would not have been possible without the support of innovative contributors like Laura.

"I’m currently a third-year Interaction Design student at Sheridan College. I’m passionate about designing inclusive experience that can make actual impacts on people’s lives. As a student researcher, I’m mainly helping the project by creating designs to better breakdown complex data and craft accessible tools for people to use, such as visualized factsheets and interactive maps in this toolkit. Through designing the toolkit, I was able to integrate creative thinking skills and advance technology that I have learned from my program into developing something that’s meaningful.” - Laura Yang

Please visit our Toolkit webpage using the URL link below:
https://source.sheridancollege.ca/centres_elder_building_connected_communities/

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