



# United Way of the Lower Mainland

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## 2017/18 Healthy Aging Report





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## Healthy Aging by United Way

To better support older adults to be socially connected, live healthy lifestyles, and maintain independence, provincial initiatives like Better at Home, Active Aging and Community and Sector Development (collectively referred to as “Healthy Aging”) aim to help seniors stay at home and in their communities for longer. We work with community agencies, local, provincial, and federal governments, a diverse set of vested partners, and donors towards our vision of a healthy, caring, inclusive community for all members. We embrace a holistic setting where older adults have unrestricted access to community programs and services so that they can age in place. United Way’s investments that support universal seniors’ wellness are bolstered by the larger Community-Based Seniors’ Services (CBSS) sector which includes municipal governments and non-profit organizations that provide programming to older adults and their families. Together, we are paving the way towards an integrated, older adult-centered model of care in British Columbia.



“  
 ...every older adult is a part of a community, which is why community-based seniors' services play a pivotal role in building the healthy, caring, inclusive places we all want to call home, at every stage of our lives.  
 ”

## Message from the President & CEO, United Way of the Lower Mainland



For a community to be great, it has to be great for everyone – no matter their age. United Way's Healthy Aging strategy ensures older adults across the province maintain healthy habits, make valuable social connections and stay engaged as valued citizens, strengthening our communities in ways that benefit us all.

The day-to-day realities of seniors' lives are changing. More people are living alone, and living longer. Traditional caregiving practice norms are evolving as more adults age with few or no children. Most significantly, as a portion of the population, the oldest in society now outnumber the youngest – a first in Canadian history. Without adequate supports, older adults are at risk of vulnerability in isolation.

Fortunately, every older adult is a part of a community, which is why community-based seniors' services play a pivotal role in building the healthy, caring, inclusive places we all want to call home, at every stage of our lives.

United Way's Healthy Aging strategy illustrates what's possible when a diverse network of partners collaborate to harness the skills and strengths of the very communities we serve, re-establishing seniors' rightful place within it. I want to thank the Government of B.C. and Ministry of Health for its ongoing partnership, leadership, and investment in seniors' wellbeing, and the local residents, volunteers, and staff working every day across the province, ensuring older adults have the supports they need to love where they live, for as long as possible.

Michael McKnight  
 President & CEO,  
 United Way of the Lower Mainland



## Message from the Provincial Director, Healthy Aging



Community is a fundamental component of our identity. It provides the structure and practices of our belonging, and forms the bedrock of a vibrant and resilient society. Because it's so important, we're devoted to building communities that are as healthy, caring, and inclusive as possible – places where everyone can live and feel at home, for as long as possible.

United Way of the Lower Mainland's Healthy Aging strategy creates seniors' support networks, mobilizes resources, and employs sectoral best practices. In the past year we have seen positive impacts, within community, on the lives of older adults, their families and friends. This report provides a glimpse into the contributions made by thousands of partners, staff, volunteers, and citizens who support Healthy Aging. We are so proud to be leading cutting edge initiatives that support older adults to live better quality lives.

I want to thank all those who have worked so hard and continue to enhance the quality of life of older adults. Our staff, volunteers, local organizations, partners, and the Province of British Columbia have been instrumental to the successes of these programs. By living united, we are improving the lives of older adults throughout the province. Together, we are stronger.

**Kahir Lalji**  
 Director, Healthy Aging  
 Director of Provincial Initiatives and Government Relations  
 United Way of the Lower Mainland



**This report provides a glimpse into the contributions made by thousands of partners, staff, volunteers, and citizens who support Healthy Aging.**





**The Council is also proud to be promoting the CBSS Declaration, and to continue to hold regional community consultations and host the second biennial Provincial Summit on Aging in the Fall of 2019.**



## Message from the Leadership Council



B.C.'s Community-Based Seniors Services (CBSS) sector has for many years provided significant support for the independence, resilience, and well-being of seniors throughout our province. However, senior-serving

organizations have found it difficult to get wider recognition of the value and impact of their contribution to the lives of older adults. First, the Raising the Profile Project, then the Provincial Summit on Aging, and now the work of the CBSS Leadership Council have validated the importance of community-based seniors' services and need to improve governments' and the public's understanding of the critical role played by these services.

A collaborative community-led effort supported and hosted by United Way of the Lower Mainland, the CBSS Leadership Council is launching a knowledge hub, to build capacity and connections within the CBSS sector and to increase collaboration with larger institutional partners to support older adults with increasingly complex needs, who want to live in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. The Council is also proud to be promoting the CBSS Declaration, and to continue to hold regional community consultations and host the second biennial Provincial Summit on Aging in the Fall of 2019. As a diverse group of committed leaders from around the province, the CBSS council provides ongoing insight into how to support seniors and senior-serving organizations of our province, and we thank them for their dedication and efforts.

Annwen Loverin and Marcy Cohen

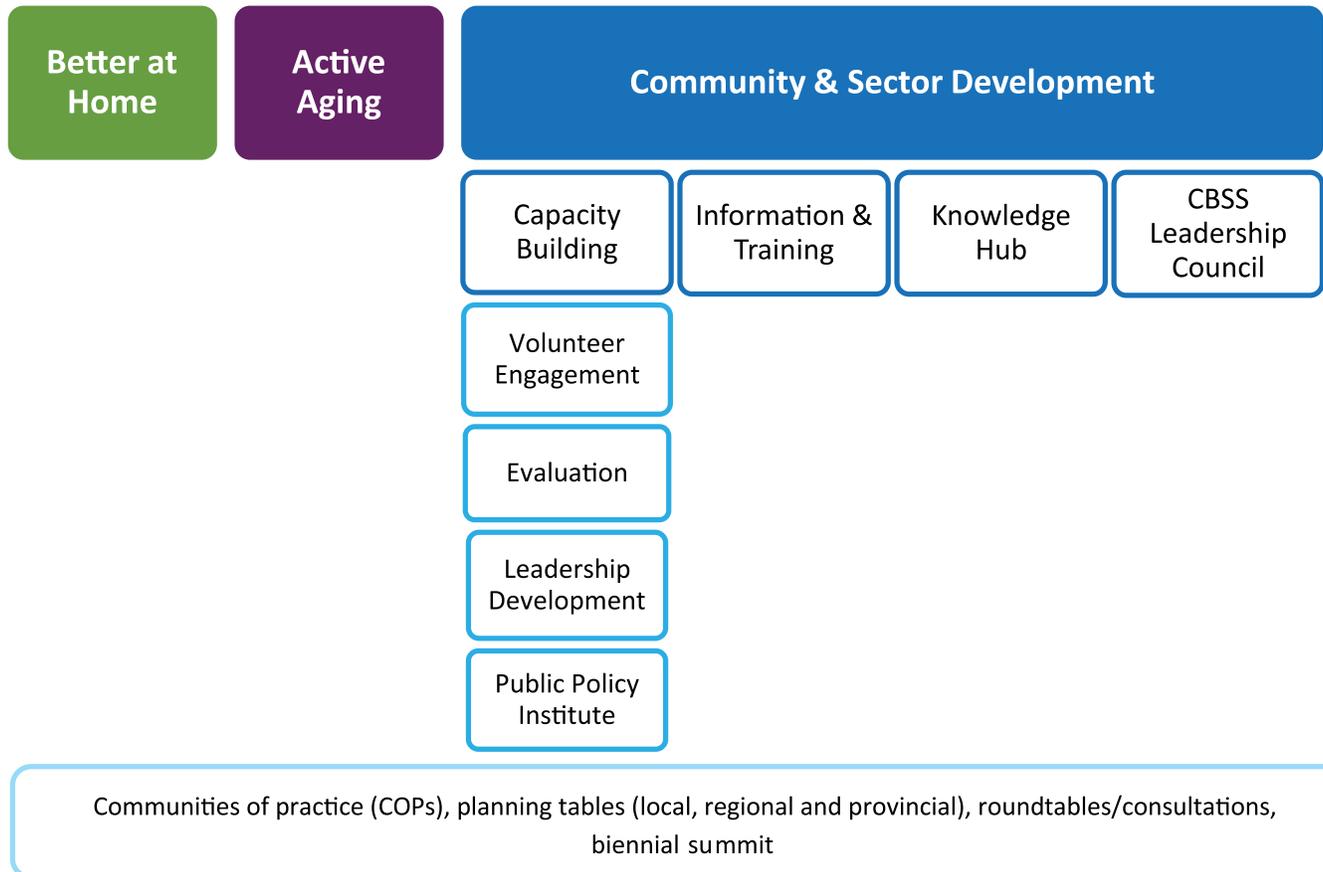
Leadership Council Co-Chairs, Healthy Aging



## Healthy Aging by United Way

United Way, in collaboration with key partners developed the Healthy Aging Strategy in response to the health and social care needs expressed by communities. The strategy is cornerstoned by three provincial programs: [Better at Home](#), [Active Aging](#), and Community and Sector Development which collaboratively provide senior-centred programming that supports access to health, social and community care, and aims to reduce social isolation and frailty. A key pillar in the development and implementation of these programs is the CBSS sector which includes all municipal and non-profit organizations that provide services and programming for older adults at the local level including: community centres, single and multi-service agencies, seniors' centres, community coalitions, neighbourhood houses, and intermediary organizations.

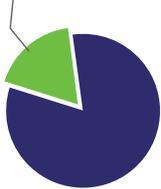
### United Way's Healthy Aging (HA) Strategy





## Seniors in B.C. 2017

18.3%



of the total population



total number of seniors:

880,048



Using a health promotion/prevention approach focused on policy development, social justice, wellness, and inclusivity, United Way has engaged in a multi-sectoral approach, to create healthy communities where seniors can age with dignity. Building on the success of the provincial Better at Home and Active Aging programs, United Way's Healthy Aging Strategy is focused on enhancing the capacity of older adults to remain physically active, socially and mentally engaged, and as healthy and independent as possible through six common outcomes:

- increased social supports
- increased civic vitality
- enhanced food security
- increased self-management of instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)
- ability to live safely
- reduction of social isolation.

**United Way's Better at Home and Active Aging programs have collectively provided 269,719 services between the period of April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018. These two programs have seen a combined active client count of 19,367 during this same period – of which, 6,935 were new participants!**



In the Spring of 2017, seven regional consultations were held around B.C. to discuss core service areas under the CBSS sector and the strategies needed to ensure that the sector is well-positioned to meet the growing needs of the aging population. Key priority areas were identified through recommendations emerging from the consultations, along with a literature review, and the learnings uncovered through twelve Better at Home Communities of Practice (COPs) facilitated across the province. These priority areas were used to develop the Healthy Aging strategy which is predicated on the following three Healthy Aging pillars: increase physical activity, reduce social isolation and maintain and enhance independence.

Healthy Aging Pillars		
Increase physical activity	Reduce social isolation	Maintain and enhance independence
Physical immobility and lack of leisure activity are related to social isolation and loneliness. One of the Healthy Aging Strategy's goals is to increase physicality to help older adults remain socially connected and active as they age.	The Healthy Aging Strategy aims to keep seniors mentally engaged in their communities, therefore reducing feelings of social isolation and social frailty. UWLM recognizes that the right connection can change everything.	Through provincial investments that maintain and enhance seniors' independence, the Healthy Aging Strategy strengthens our commitment to providing home and community services that encourage self-determination.

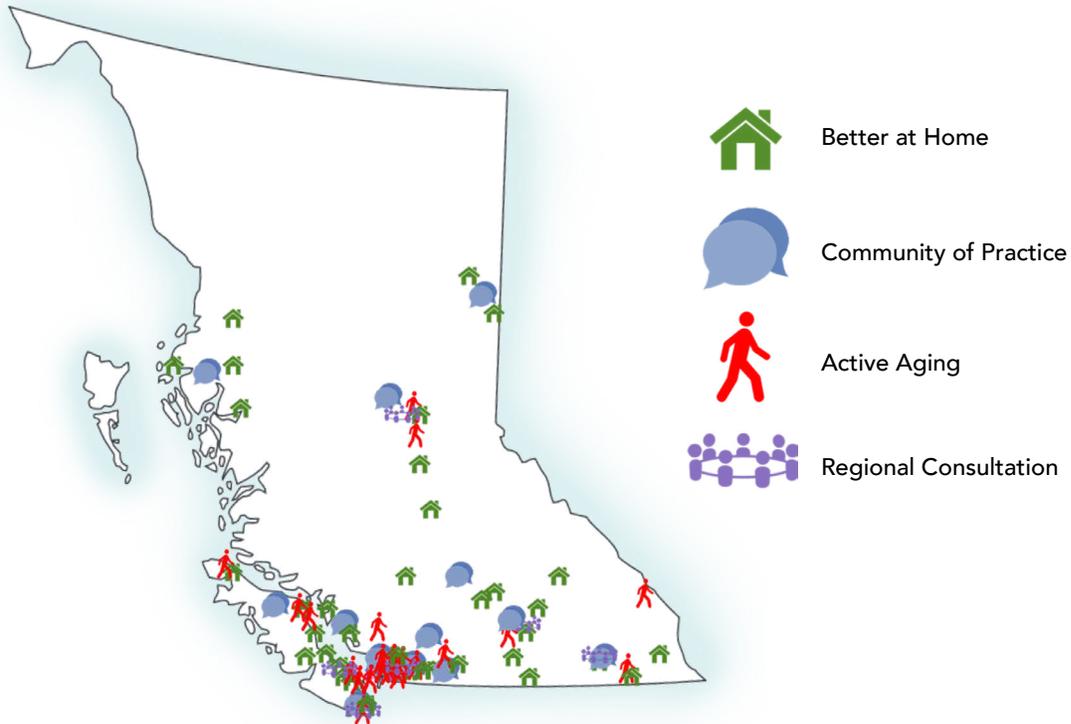
### Priority Areas Identified

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Volunteer infrastructure                        | 4. Shared language concerning the sector's benefits | 8. Diversity and inclusion capacity, now     |
| 2. Develop seniors planning tables and roundtables | 5. Training by the sector and for the sector        | 9. Development of intergenerational programs |
| 3. Consistent and sustained funding                | 6. Information, referral and advocacy               | 10. Urban, rural and remote connection       |
|  | 7. Development of transportation infrastructure     |  |



## Geographic Reach

The following map shows the location and reach of the key components of United Way's Healthy Aging Strategy:





## Year at a glance (2017-18)

### Healthy Aging by United Way

 **19,367**  
active clients

 **269,719**  
services provided

**+**  **6,935**  
new participants



 **11,596**  
active clients

 **179,446**  
services provided

**+**  **4,609**  
new participants



 **7,771**  
active clients

 **90,273**  
services provided

**+**  **2,326**  
new participants

## Better at Home



**Better at Home improves the quality of life of older adults by keeping them socially connected and independent in their communities.**

It is estimated that by 2038, one in four people living in B.C. will be a senior and in some communities we are already there. The majority of these older adults will want to “age in place” in their own communities and in their own homes. Aging in place is fundamental to the overall well-being and healthy aging of individuals. It enhances and maintains independence, can mitigate social isolation, increases self esteem, and enables older adults to remain connected and contribute to the societies in which they live, all of which are predictors of good health in later life.

By providing non-medical home supports through programs like Better at Home, older adults are supported to stay at home for longer, increasing their quality of life. Better at Home will only become more important as seniors live longer, and in ways that look very different from generations past.

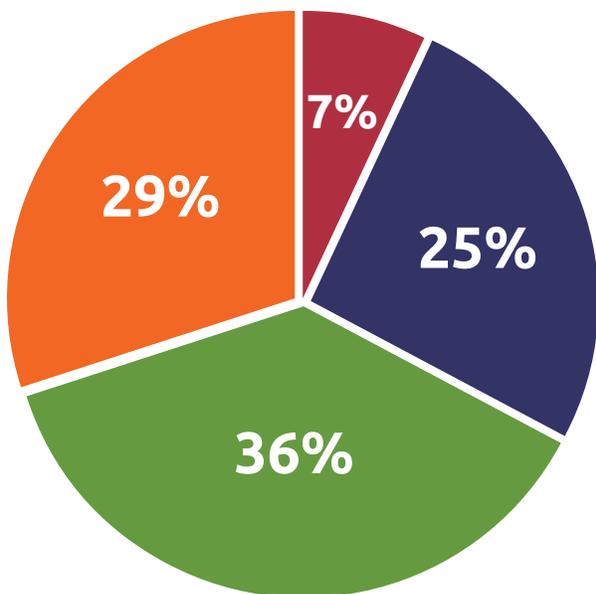
**Over the past year (April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018), the Better at Home program has provided a total of 179,446 services and served 11,596 unique participants.**

Better at Home is funded by the Government of BC  
and managed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland

## Age Profile of Better at Home Participants

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018

Age\*:



\* Any percentage discrepancies are due to under-reporting or unknown data

## Gender and Living Arrangements of Better at Home participants:



## Service Distribution:

The Better at Home program provided a total of **179,596** service moments with the following distribution:



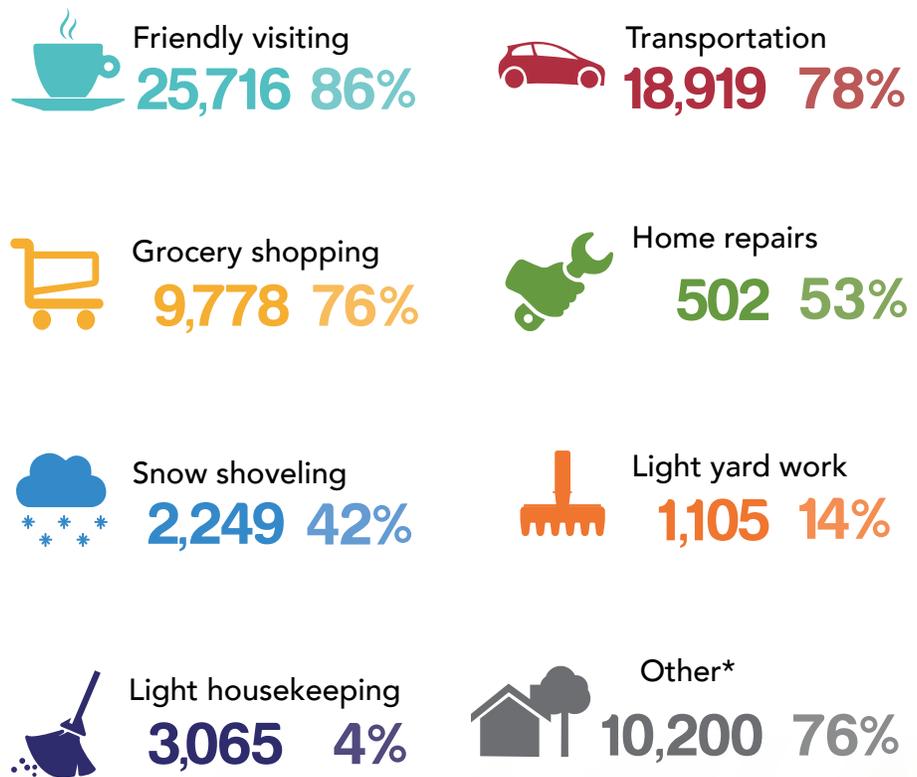
\*\* Group social activities, wood chopping, etc.

# Volunteers

**40%**  
of all services were provided by volunteers

Thousands of volunteers throughout the province ensure that United Way's Better at Home program and our partner agencies provide these necessary services to seniors across B.C.

Of the **179,596 services provided** between April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018, **40% of all services were provided by volunteers** within the Better at Home program. The following distribution represents the breakdown of each service provided by Better at Home volunteers:



Surrey/Whalley Youth Volunteer

\* Group social activities, wood chopping, etc.

## Volunteer Story

### Better at Home Volunteer Raises Funds by Swimming Across Osoyoos Lake

Putting on her cap and goggles, 75-year-old Ingrid Nicholson celebrated her birthday by swimming 11 kilometres across the entire Canadian stretch of Osoyoos Lake.



Ingrid committed herself to swimming two hours each day for four days to complete the task. But Ingrid didn't do it just because she likes a good challenge. She is raising funds for the Desert Sun Counseling and Resource Centre which offers programs like Better At Home.

"We drive seniors to the seniors centre or to the hair dresser or to the doctor appointment and I love it," said Nicholson, who has been a volunteer with the organization for the past five years.

Nicholson exceeded her original fundraising goal and raised \$3,200 while inspiring others with her drive and passion.

"She's my role model! I used to say Oprah Winfrey was but now Ingrid is and I hope to be somebody that can live up to that kind of inspiration," said Desert Sun Executive Director Roxie Van Aller.

“The Better At Home program is really vital and key to the communities here in the south because we have a lot of seniors that live here.”

## Volunteer Story

“

I thoroughly enjoy my weekly visit with Orlene. We usually have tea and cookies and we visit. We talk about everything from our kids to the weather. It's so nice to have a visitor; the days can sometimes be a bit long when you're on your own.

”  
~ D.F



While I'm out in my community and I see seniors I always wonder what their story is. Sometimes I see them struggle in different areas and my heart always wants to leap in to help in whatever way I possibly can. They've seen and experienced a lot in their lifetime and I believe that seniors in our community deserve the utmost respect and love.

In Dec 2017, I started volunteering with the Kerrisdale, Oakridge, Marpole Better at Home program as a volunteer visitor and I've had the best experience. The co-ordinator did a fantastic job pairing me up with the most wonderful lady. The senior I visit is witty, happy, tells jokes and stories. We enjoy tea and cookies as she speaks of her childhood often and how things used to be long ago. I've learned so much from her. I love to hear her laugh! I visit for an hour once a week and we always look forward to our next visit.

It's fulfilling to know that I'm doing my part to help the seniors in our community and I'm grateful that this program has given me that opportunity.

O.C



## Participant Story



Thanks to the work that her housekeeper does, Sharon has more time to participate in the Collingwood Neighbourhood House seniors programs such as Coffee Social, Monday Fun-Day, and field trips.

Sharon is a committed promoter of the Better at Home program and active member of the Renfrew Collingwood seniors community. She recommends the program to her neighbours and friends when she has the opportunity. She is always concerned and compassionate about other seniors who speak English as a second language. She tries to reach out to them by keeping flyers and other promotional materials from Better at Home and Collingwood Neighbourhood House programs and services in her building.

**Thank You  
to all of our  
volunteers!**

## Evaluation



We are committed to monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) as it is vital to the success of Better at Home. MEL activities are connected to and inform Better at Home leadership by:

- planning, program development, and ongoing quality improvements
- tracking and describing progress, results, and impacts
- ensuring and demonstrating accountability

### Previous and ongoing evaluations

In 2013, an evaluation was conducted during the early stages of Better at Home. This evaluation examined the context, implementation, and impact of Better at Home to support operational planning and further development.

In 2015, the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research funded a team from UBC and SFU to undertake a research study for the evaluation of Better at Home. The research team is investigating Better at Home recipients' use of healthcare services, clients' quality of life and well-being, cost-effectiveness, and effects on informal caregivers. It is anticipated that this report will be completed in the fall of 2018.

In 2016, we conducted an evaluation of the Better at Home Rural and Remote Project. This study assessed the efficiency, impact and implementation of the Better at Home service delivery model and service utilization in the six pilot programs and their sub-communities across British Columbia.



In 2017 United Way of the Lower Mainland undertook the task of evaluating the four of the First Nations Better at Home programs delivered on the Squamish/Tsleil-Waututh, Cowichan, Stolo and Gitxsan Nations. We captured the strengths, cultural differences and the unique needs of Elders on First Nations' territories. An Indigenous framework was used to capture the information needed in culturally appropriate ways – talking circles, meeting to share a meal and the comfort of Elders' homes. This report will be available in the Fall of 2018. We anticipate valuable recommendations from the coordinators, Elders and evaluators to help us understand the specific unique needs of each of these programs so they can continue to support and serve Elders in their own communities.

In 2017 we undertook the evaluation of the Better at Home programs (excluding Rural and Remote and First Nations sites, undergoing separate evaluations). The evaluation framework focused on 57 Better at Home program sites, and where necessary, the associated sub-communities. The framework was designed to examine and report on the context, implementation, service delivery model and overall impact(s) of Better at Home on seniors, families/caregivers, organizations and the communities they serve. The overarching objective was to see the effects and changes resulting from the Better at Home Program on the people and communities it is designed to serve. The final evaluation report along with recommendations will be available August 2018.

**Copies of these and other reports can be found at:**

<http://betterathome.ca/research-and-reports/>





## Active Aging



**United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Provincial Government's Active Aging BC have partnered with UBC's Active Aging Research Team (AART) to create programs that encourage older adults to remain active and socially engaged as they age.**

Seniors are among our country's least physically active and most socially isolated citizens. Their tendency toward sedentary and solitary lifestyles puts them at risk of poor physical health, decline, and loss of both their independence and social support networks.

Significant evidence now demonstrates the importance of maintaining certain levels of physical activity, social connectedness and independence on the health and well-being of older adults. United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Provincial Government's Active Aging BC have partnered with UBC's Active Aging Research Team to create programs that encourage older adults to remain active and socially engaged as they age.

### **The three 'key pillars' of healthy aging form the basis of the two Active Aging Grants that United Way manages:**

- **Physical Activity.** Activities, skills development and/or educational awareness programs that address sedentary lifestyles and ways to safely incorporate more physical activity into everyday life, and opportunities to engage in activities focused on movement and reduced sedentary time (e.g. using public transportation, walking to shops or appointments, gardening, dancing).
- **Social Connections.** Activities that offer seniors experiences that increase the frequency and quality of social connections in their community, as well as activities that are interactive, educational, provide new opportunities to engage with each other and their community, and/or are recreational in nature (e.g. any programming that includes meal sharing, intergenerational connections, outings in community, support groups).



- **Independence.** Activities, skills development, and/or educational awareness programs that are designed to support seniors in their desire to remain independent, informed, up-to-date, and responsible for their personal affairs (e.g. income-tax clinics, financial literacy or personal planning workshops, computer classes, peer-counseling programs).

In 2017/18, the Active Aging Grant supported 27 programs across B.C. that ranged from connecting First Nations Elders to community recreation in Prince George, to intercultural Tai Chi in Surrey, to a men's shed initiative in Squamish, and a horticultural mentorship program in Vancouver. The first-ever call for a two-year Active Aging Grant was made in January and grants were awarded to successful applicants in March 2018.

A call was also made for the new Choose to Move Grant and awards were granted for pilot programs across the province in March 2018. An evidence-based program designed by the



We found that encouraging seniors to participate in exercise and lunch program worked really well for us. It motivated many seniors who have very sedentary lifestyle and poor nutritional intake. We found that playful exercises engaged seniors in physical activities and as a result they started to feel better. Well balanced lunches after the exercise class worked really well. Many families have reported that their loved ones look forward to attending the program every week. They also reported that they are emotionally content and they have been talking about the program when they go home. Essentially this program has provided them with a purpose in life and they have made some new friends.

*Provincial Seniors Exercise and Lunch Program*



Seniors said they found the activities purposeful and educational and that participation allowed them to be active with new friends.





## Choose to Move

Choose to Move is an evidence-based program tailored to the B.C. context by UBC's Active Aging Research Team. It is a free and flexible motivation and support program designed to help older adults become more active in their communities – enabling them to live more independent, healthy lives. It is designed for anyone age 65 and older that wants and needs to become more physically active, regardless of ability.

Choose to Move offers significant improvements in the lives of older adults in B.C., especially in three important domains:

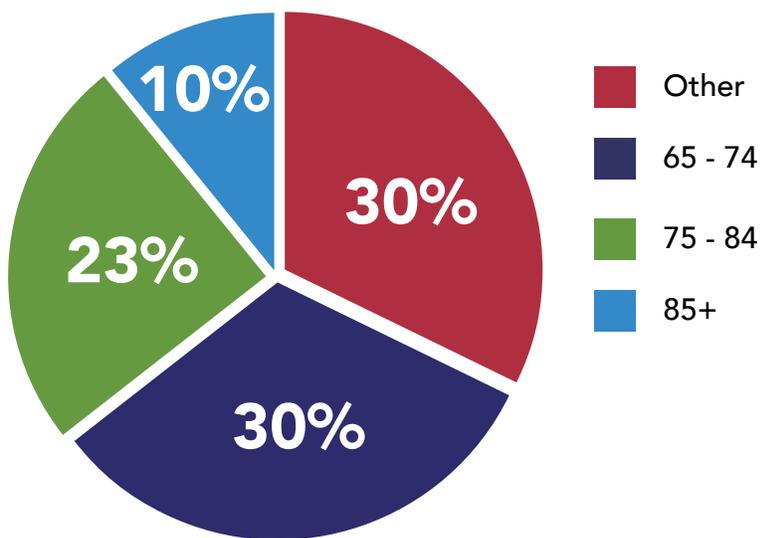


Active Aging Research Team, Choose to Move is intended for anyone age 65 and older who wants and needs to become more physically active, regardless of ability.

Active Aging and Choose to Move programs also assist seniors in learning how to access local services and benefits so that they are better able to navigate the medical, government and legal systems in their communities. The overall goal of these two Active Aging grants is to increase seniors' level of physical activity in order to improve social connections, increase levels of independence, and enhance seniors' well-being and quality of life.

### Age\* of Active Aging Program Participants:

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018



*\*The percentage in the 'Other' category represents participation of children and youth in several intergenerational programs. Any percentage discrepancies are due to under-reporting or unknown data.*

## Summary of Active Aging Services

Over the past year (April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018), 27 programs funded by Active Aging grants provided a total of 90,273 services through 86 locations across British Columbia and served 7,771 unique participants. During this period, 2,326 new seniors participated in one or more activities.



The aspects of our program that worked best include: providing opportunities for youth volunteers to enhance and deliver programming with seniors, and providing opportunities for seniors to develop leadership skills. Having intergenerational exchange between youth and seniors is a very beneficial experience for both groups. Youth report feeling more connected to their community and culture, feeling appreciated, and feeling motivated to get more involved in the community. Seniors report elevated mood, feeling more independent, and feeling respected as an elder.

*Lower Mainland Youth for Chinese Seniors*

"As the wife of a husband who had a stroke over two years ago and was told by a therapist that he wouldn't be able to learn any new skills, this workshop was perfect to help build his confidence in the fact that, yes - he is more than able to learn."

*Provincial Quadra Seniors Get Moving*





**“ We found that playful exercises engaged seniors in physical activities and as a result they started to feel better. ”**



One senior mentioned a few times that they often feel lonely, they continue to come to the farm to be part of a social environment which helps them get through their days. This same person has offered to use his metal work and wood working skills to build some tools for the farm that he noticed we do not have. He said that for the past several years he has had no interest in woodworking but would be interested in starting up again if there was a way to make himself useful.

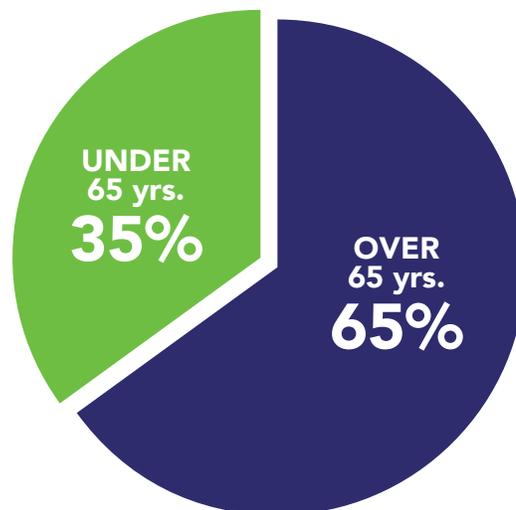
*Lower Mainland Greenhouse Social Club: Age Friendly Gardening for Active Seniors*

### Volunteer Engagement

The Active Aging program utilized

**874 volunteers**

ACTIVE AGING VOLUNTEERS





## Community & Sector Development



Our Community and Sector Development work is currently moving through a period of immense growth and development. This pillar includes sector strengthening initiatives, such as leading a Provincial Volunteer Engagement Strategy, cutting edge leadership development, and applied developmental evaluation training. It is informed by the sector itself through outreach and consultation, and by research, promising practices, partners, and thought leaders.

### Collaboration with the Raising the Profile Project

The [Raising the Profile Project](#) was a provincial initiative aimed at developing the network of community-based seniors' services (CBSS) in B.C., and strengthening the capacity of this sector to meet the growing needs of an aging population. The network consisted of executive directors and managers from municipal and non-profit organizations throughout B.C., seniors who are volunteer leaders in the CBSS sector, as well as provincial organizations that support the work of the sector.

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**It is informed by the sector itself through outreach and consultation, and by research, promising practices, partners, and thought leaders.**

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**The first Provincial Summit on Aging was held November 2nd and 3rd, 2017 to recognize the important work and contribution of the CBSS sector.**

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The overall goals of the project were to:

- Raise awareness in the broader community and government of the vital role played by community-based older seniors' services to support older adults to remain socially, physically and mentally active, and maintain their health and independence for as long as possible.
- Document the uneven provision of, and support for, these services in different communities and regions of the province, and the limited access to services for many low income, isolated, immigrant, LGBTQ, rural, and Indigenous seniors.
- Outline a business case for greater investment in this sector based on the evidence showing that healthcare utilization and healthcare costs can be significantly reduced when seniors are socially engaged, physically active, and have access to nutritional education and supports.
- Identify specific capacity building strategies and social innovations that would improve collaboration and coordination within the sector and/or result in stronger relationships with, and commitment from, external partners and funders.

In 2017, the ongoing work of the Raising the Profile initiative was incorporated into the United Way's Healthy Aging Strategy, and the investment in seniors' wellness continues through an integrated older adult-centred network that is guided by the CBSS Leadership Council (formerly Raising the Profile Advisory Committee). Additionally, United Way will support the on-going Regional Consultations and biennial Provincial Summit on Aging.

### **Inaugural Provincial Summit on Aging November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017**

The first Provincial Summit on Aging was held November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 to recognize the important work and contribution of the CBSS sector. Leaders from across the province, representing all levels of municipal, provincial and federal government, non-profit organizations, health services, community advocates, and older adults themselves came together to identify and craft solutions to the most critical issues facing seniors in B.C. today. An initiative of Raising the Profile, the Summit was hosted by the City of Surrey in partnership with United Way of the Lower Mainland, Better at Home, Active Aging Research Team, and the B.C. Recreation



and Parks Association, with sponsorship from the B.C. Ministry of Health.

Summit delegates participated in issue dialogues centered around: transportation, physical activity, recreation, information, referral, advocacy, nutritional supports, wellness, education, creative arts programming, and affordable housing, while informative panels and plenary speakers energized the over 200 attendees.

Recognizing the important role played by municipal governments and not-for-profit organizations in the overall health, wellbeing, and quality of life of the older residents of B.C., the first Declaration for the CBSS sector was presented at the Summit. Its guiding principles articulate the value of the CBSS sector and incorporate concrete commitments to move this important work forward.



To date, almost 200 organizations and countless individuals have signed on in support of the CBSS Declaration. For more information please visit:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CBSSDeclaration>



## CBSS Declaration



### Declaration of the Community-Based Seniors' Services Sector in B.C.

As representatives from the federal, provincial and municipal governments, leaders from the Community-Based Seniors' Services sector, leaders from community foundations, and allies of the sector, we recognize the important role played by the many programs and services offered by municipal governments and not-for-profit organizations to the overall health, well-being and quality of life of the older citizens of this Province.

At the same time, we acknowledge that the capacity of the Community-Based Seniors' Services sector to deliver programs and services will need to be enhanced if, as a province, we are to maximize the potential for older adults to have the choice to "age in place" and remain in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. We also acknowledge that this will require closer collaboration between the not-for-profit organizations, municipalities, and the provincial health system.

We therefore call on all those involved in the Community-Based Seniors' Services sector – as funders, policy makers, decision makers, seniors, families, friends, caregivers, service providers, organizations, leaders, and volunteers – to sign on to this Declaration to ensure that:

*Community-Based Seniors' Services are formally recognized as a sector that plays an essential role in supporting seniors' independence, resilience and social connectedness.*

*The definition of the Community-Based Seniors' Services (or CBSS) sector includes all municipal and not-for-profit organizations that provide services and programming for older adults at the local level -- at community centres, single-and multi-service agencies, seniors' centres, community coalitions and neighbourhood houses -- throughout our province.*

*The seven core programs and services offered by the sector reflects the diversity of British Columbia's geography and seniors' population and includes: Nutritional Supports; Wellness Programs; Physical Activity; Recreation, Education and Arts Programming; Information and Referral; Transportation; and Affordable Housing.*

This Declaration is intended as a demonstration of our commitment to the seniors of British Columbia and to ensure that Community-Based Seniors' Services are a priority for all stakeholders who serve the people of British Columbia.



Healthy Aging. At home. In community.



## Knowledge Hub and CBSS Declaration Consultations

The goal of the Knowledge Hub is to build capacity and cohesion within the CBSS sector, and to increase collaboration with larger institutional partners (e.g. municipalities/regional districts, health authorities, Ministry of Health, etc.) to support older adults with increasingly complex needs to live in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. This is based on research evidence showing that the programs and services offered through the CBSS sector that support older adults to remain physically and mentally active, socially connected, and resilient, have significant health benefits and can reduce health care utilization and costs.

The Knowledge Hub will be a provincially-coordinated learning network designed to strengthen the CBSS sector, and increase organizational and sector capacity through information sharing, training, mentoring, communities of practice, policy development, and resource development. It will primarily be an interactive on-line platform designed to be accessible, inclusive, easy to navigate, and regularly updated so that it is always current, relevant, and dynamic ie, changing and growing in response to CBSS user needs and interests.

### Content Areas:

**Program Development** – Support communities to share, learn, co-create, and scale-up programs in the seven core areas identified by [Raising the Profile](#).

**Organizational Development** – Information sharing, training, and learning related to human resource challenges, proposal writing, program evaluation, volunteer infrastructure, leadership skills development, etc.

**Sector Capacity Building Strategies** – Review existing collaborative processes and structures in place at the local level; identify benefits, challenges, overlaps and gaps in these processes; outline best practices needed to ensure that these processes are both effective and sustainable, and identify and work with potential funders.

Year one Knowledge Hub activities and deliverables will be evaluated, and regular updates and improvements will be made to the platform.

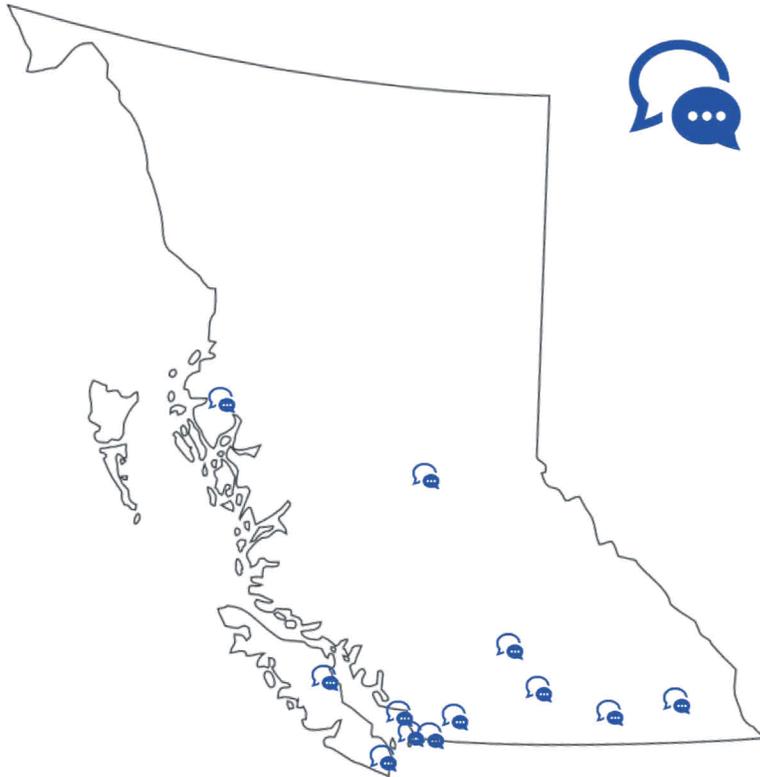
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**The Knowledge Hub will be a provincially-coordinated learning network designed to strengthen the CBSS sector, and increase organizational and sector capacity...**

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Regional gatherings are being planned to provide updates on progress since Raising the Profile consultations and the Healthy Aging Summit, and to gather input to inform Knowledge Hub content and user experience development.



CBSS Declaration and Knowledge Hub update consultations scheduled for 2018

1. Vancouver/Burnaby
2. Surrey
3. North Vancouver Island
4. South Vancouver Island/Gulf Islands
5. Sea to Sky/Sunshine Coast
6. Kamloops
7. Kelowna
8. East Kootenay
9. West Kootenay
10. Prince George
11. Northwest





## Capacity Building



### Volunteer Engagement Strategy

In April 2017, Better at Home developed a Provincial Volunteer Engagement Strategy to help support Better at Home programs in volunteer recruitment, training and development, and retention. Volunteers are crucial to the success of the Better at Home model and to other seniors' serving agencies that utilize volunteers in their programming – they also provide an important opportunity for community members to become involved with and support local seniors. Volunteerism helps build community connections and provides volunteers with a sense of purpose and belonging.

The Provincial Volunteer Engagement Strategy focuses on five deliverables:

#### 1. Training and Capacity Building

- Ongoing provincial, regional, and local investments in training and capacity building to enable Better at Home staff, service providers, and volunteers to run effective programs and provide high quality services

#### 2. Development of a Volunteer Portal

- *Phase 1* – A centralized and accessible online platform that enables a program like Better at Home to connect with and recruit potential volunteers across B.C. and showcase available volunteer opportunities, resources, and training province-wide (pilot with Better at Home)
- *Phase 2* – Expansion of the volunteer portal to other CBSS organizations that use volunteers to support their seniors' programs

**Volunteers are crucial to the success of the Better at Home model and beyond.**



“  
When we work to enhance provincial program sustainability through the model of utilizing volunteers for service delivery, we continue our commitment to helping organizations obtain the necessary resources to be able to manage effective programs.  
”

### 3. Engagement in Provincial Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Activities

- Provincial volunteer recruitment and retention activities and the creation of local tools to assist Better at Home programs in obtaining a robust volunteer base (including a list of provincial volunteer events by region, tools for hosting volunteer retention, and training events (based on the success of Vancouver’s Better at Home Caring Summit), and a provincial Volunteer Recruitment Package and social media campaign aligning with National Volunteer Week

### 4. Provincial Volunteer Management Best Practices

- Provincial guidelines that provide Better at Home programs with a targeted, relevant, and extensive set of Volunteer Management Best Practices for use in the administration of their current volunteers

### 5. Provincial Volunteer Satisfaction Survey

- Provincial volunteer survey to gain feedback on the thoughts, opinions, and experiences of Better at Home volunteers, assess their level of satisfaction with Better at Home, and enhance the quality of the volunteering experience

United Way’s Healthy Aging Strategy will aim to test and pilot the above activities through the Better at Home network and apply the learnings to the broader CBSS sector in a phased project roll-out. When we work to enhance provincial program sustainability through the model of utilizing volunteers for service delivery, we continue our commitment to helping organizations obtain the necessary resources to be able to manage effective programs.

### Project Impact

Project Impact provides a multi-month experience of instruction, coaching, and practice that builds the capacity of program staff to design and implement evaluations of impact. An evaluation team of program leaders and stakeholders from each of 10 to 12 CBSS organizations will be convened in a collegial learning cohort that will meet together for two, two-day evaluation retreats. Between the intensive retreats, additional instruction will be provided through regular webinars. Through the course of the project, evaluation strategies will be developed and piloted to test instruments and collect data, determine findings, communicate impact, and produce data informed program experiments and innovation. A minimum of two and maximum of three people from each selected organization will comprise each of the teams.



## Community Accountability



### CBSS Leadership Council

The CBSS Leadership Council acts as a consultative and governance body for the United Way's capacity building strategic initiatives. The representatives on the CBSS Leadership Council include managers/executive directors from not-for-profit senior serving agencies, seniors who are volunteer leaders in the sector, and managers/executive directors of municipally delivered seniors' services. They build on the work of the Raising the Profile Advisory Committee and Senior's Reference Group in advocating for increasing the capacity of CBSS to meet the growing needs of B.C.'s aging population.

### Municipal Caucus

A Municipal Caucus has been convened to champion the CBSS Declaration, partnerships, and support at the local government level. This municipal caucus will be working to encourage the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) to develop policies on the municipal role in supporting healthy aging, and ensure a higher profile for the sector at the next UBCM meeting in September 2018. It will also provide input and ideas for a variety of projects, initiatives, contributions of expertise, resource materials, stories, directories, and other relevant content. Presentations to local governments throughout B.C. are planned over the next year to encourage municipalities to focus on strengthening and developing local seniors focused policies in their community. We will also share information on provincial and local Healthy Aging initiatives including requests to become CBSS Declaration signatories.



**To date, the Seniors Funding Table includes over 30 regional, provincial, and national organizations providing funding to CBSS in B.C.**

## Seniors Funding Table

The Seniors Funding Table of B.C. is a group of CBSS sector funders that provide input on the funding models/criterion, evaluation, and strategic direction of the CBSS sector in British Columbia to support the increased capacity and sustainability of the sector to address the growing needs of B.C.'s aging population. This group includes working components, and adheres to the principles of community development: identifying efficient and collaborative processes for funding the sector's common outcome measures and areas where there are shared priorities and the potential for joint funding initiatives. To date, the Seniors' Funding Table includes over 30 regional, provincial, and national organizations providing funding to CBSS in B.C. The Table has developed an inventory of the different organizations that fund the sector, and is in the process of collecting and reviewing their funding guidelines.

## Provincial Reference Group



The Provincial Reference Group acts as a consultative body bringing together subject matter experts and community partners from across the province, representing key stakeholders as well as different geographical regions. This group provides input on the operations, projects, evaluation and direction of the Better at Home services across the province.





The sunshine that they bring into our lives by letting us get out once in a while, you cannot place it as high as it should be, it's a wonderful group, and I want to thank all of you for what you have done for me and for others.

- Better at Home Participant



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