



# ***Intergenerational Housing and Innovative Housing Models for Older Adults – A Literature Review***

## **Why this study**

Older Canadians form a diverse and heterogeneous group that has different needs and experiences diverse challenges when it comes to housing. Age, income, geographic location, ethnicity, indigeneity and disability are all examples of factors that may create challenges with finding adequate and appropriate housing.

Gaining an enhanced understanding of the housing situation of older Canadians, as well as the alternative housing models available, enables Employment and Social Development Canada to identify specific challenges affecting them as well as possible solutions.

## **What we did**

Employment and Social Development Canada granted a contract to Dr. Atiya Mahmood in the Department of Gerontology at Simon Fraser University to conduct a literature review on intergenerational housing and other innovative models for older adults. Dr. Mahmood and her team conducted a literature review of the leading 84 academic and grey literature sources on the subject and presented Employment and Social Development Canada with a report that provides a summary and analysis of the state of the knowledge in the literature.

## **What we found**

In 2016, 14% of Canadian older adults' households were in core housing need. Of those, 85% were found to be in core housing need solely due to a lack of affordability. Among the households led by older adults, those with older women living alone have been identified as being in the highest core housing need. In addition, over 93% of Canadian older adults have reported their resistance to relocation to institutional care settings, and their wish to age in place and remain connected to the community in later life.

There are 10 leading categories of innovative seniors housing models: (i) co-living; (ii) cohousing; (iii) homesharing; (iv) cooperative housing; (v) affinity communities; (vi) service-integrated housing; (vii) life lease housing; (viii) community hub; (ix) Naturally Occurring Retirement Community Supportive Services Program; and (x) the Village.

The main advantages and disadvantages of these innovative housing models include:

- enhanced affordability;
- the lack of existing external funding, resources, and supportive infrastructure which poses a barrier to the scaling and sustainability of most models;



- they lead to lower depression and decreased needs for formal care, as well as increased awareness of health promotion and disease prevention strategies;
- they augment social participation and reduce loneliness and isolation;
- the intergenerational environment fosters the provision of mutual support; and
- most models lack diversity.

## What it means

This research helps support the vision set out in the Government's National Housing Strategy, which is to ensure that Canadians have housing that meets their needs and that they can afford. This research is also supporting the Government's priority to focus support on vulnerable Canadians, such as seniors, in addressing their housing needs.

## For more information

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