Raising the Profile Project
Regional Community Meeting #3, Kelowna BC
April 11, 2017

Introduction:

Raising the Profile Project is carrying out community-level consultations with stakeholders in the community-based seniors' services sector. These notes summarize the discussions for this meeting as part of our commitment to participants, but they are not exhaustive. A complete list of issues will be kept for analysis leading to a Provincial Forum in the fall of 2017.

Relevance of Raising the Profile Project to Community-Based Seniors Sector:

Marcy presented a detailed description of the Raising the Profile Project. Responses included:

- Consistency in funding - long term and committed - is the key to providing reliable, strengths-based, collaborative programming
- Information and Referral services are key to navigating the system and the services that exist- it takes work to update them, connect them to each other, and reach beyond computer-based delivery into multiple ways - face to face - to tailor access
- Seniors services are often crisis-based, rather than whole health approach
- The most vulnerable are not connected - prevention takes direct contact
- Group meals are excellent and effective base for integrated health and social approaches

Relationship between healthcare and Community-Based Seniors Sector:

Annwen provided an overview of the links between the healthcare system and the community-based seniors sector, Discussion included:

- Excellent frameworks, such as Age-Friendly Communities and Healthy Families BC, exist - and they need to activated with engaged relationships with municipal leadership
- Switch from the demand-driven model - as in rec centres - to needs-driven, to be relevant to the most vulnerable who are not speaking out.
- Invite leadership and decision-makers into ongoing information exchange between sectors, including the stream from the senior's advocate, chief medical officer, bureaucrats to politicians - communication is a two-way street.
- What do we do with those who 'don't fit' into categories, those with complex cases? Must adapt on a case basis.

Impact: How can senior's agencies have more impact?

- Build networks of allies for collaboration and nurture it for ongoing relevance
- Support for agencies to build, translate, and interpret qualitative / quantitative data
- Collaboration in Comox and on islands works well and could be spread. Collaboration requires Joint/ collaborative volunteer recruitment for strategic organizational development

- Time and resources for collaborating story discovery amongst agencies, and for telling the stories: including diversity of generations and cultures amongst seniors
- More collective impact - to reduce competition for funding and increase coordination

Promoting the sector broadly: How can we strengthen and raise the profile of the sector? (E.g.: how can the sector become known to and supported by more people and more deeply)?

- Encourage intergenerational activities e.g.: Bellies to Babies new parents receive support from experienced seniors who have raised kids, seniors get socialization and services: changes social norms
- Cross-sectoral partnerships: business sector, service sector as win-win
- Have to get and maintain municipal/ regional leadership on board
- Change the stigma of aging: seniors as relevant, 'sexy', set up conversations of benefits of older years: wisdom, perspective, skills

Volunteers: What are the pros and cons of how volunteers are involved in service provision? What would optimal involvement of volunteers look like?

- Ask what would happen if there were no volunteers? That reveals the value and diversity
- Standardize & collaborate volunteer education & training for anyone working in community, residential care, hospice. Make training a requirement, clear boundaries and expectations.
- Support volunteerism as a program with designated staff coordination: with respect and inclusion
- Promote leadership amongst seniors and recognize & accept their experience
- Seniors as volunteers have different needs and interests: time, other activities, what skills they want to engage

Advocacy: How can the sector have more influence with municipalities, regional district and the healthcare system?

- Match the provincial advocate with local, small setting advocates - same operational process - that feeds into senior's advocate - long-term and future-looking
- Develop and train skills for community-based advocates: community development, gerontology
- Build trust for messages amongst agencies, decision-makers and authorities to 'hear' message
- Research-backed standards of care service and access to CBSS support: can't ignore - must include private supported residences
- Ask upstream: "Why do we treat seniors this way?"

Capacity Building in our sector: How can we best build and support the capacity of your agency or community of agencies?

- Municipalities can take an active leadership role in capacity building: funding, positions, infrastructure

- Interior Health can improve communication with community stakeholders: be clear in responses and where/when action will happen; for continuity in roles and relationship with departmental services; moving of staff esp. rural/remote
- Support agencies to realistically assess & identify their strengths so they can collaborate and develop strategically
- Engage local governments for leadership/ knowledge/ resources, in turn supporting collaborative plans with funding

Urban / Rural and remote: How do gaps vary from community to community? How do we better align resources with needs?
- Small communities can be more creative with resources & services: connections can be stronger, more resilient: this is an asset & approach
- Watch for the assumption that remote communities are somehow connected to each other
- Asset map diverse transportation service options - e.g. Handy dart, volunteer services - to match and make connections that work on the ground
- Regional districts need to step up in long-term planning: zoning, building codes, standards
- Map the differences: urban specialization / rural informal

Funding: What changes are needed in how funding is provided to the sector and its agencies?
- Community-based decision-making: mobilize to direct programs and services
- Ministry of Seniors!
- Core, sustained, committed and program-based funding is the only way to maintain consistent, trusted BCSS. Project-based, non-operational funding fractures the sector.
- A coordinated Funder Table to strategize and build CBSS-aligned support, including all funders: community foundations, health authorities, other departments, municipal and provincial govt.
- Need, rather than population-based funding: consider rural, complex, presence of other agencies
- Develop funders' local knowledge for equitable allocation of funds

Next Steps:
- We have recently completed seven consultations: Victoria, Nanaimo, Kelowna, Nelson, Vancouver, Surrey and Prince George.
- We will prepare a written report and graphic illustration summarizing what we learned from all these 7 consultations, including key recommendations/directions for action.
- In addition to sending the report and graphic illustration to all of you, we will be sharing the findings with key decision-makers in government and community foundations who fund the sector.
- The learnings and recommendations from the seven consultations will also be presented to the Raising the Profile for Seniors' Provincial Summit in Surrey on Nov. 2nd and 3rd, 2017.
- There will be 200 people invited to the Surrey Summit from around the province including representatives from the community-based seniors' services sector, seniors who are volunteer

leaders in the sector, provincial organizations that support the sector, municipalities, funders, academics, the Health Authorities and the Ministry of Health.

- Given the limited number of people from community-based seniors' services who will be able to attend the summit, the selection process has been carefully designed to ensure that:
    o the representatives reflect the geography and diversity of the seniors' population in BC, and
    o prioritizes participation from non-profit seniors' serving organizations, who are strategically positioned to provide on-going leadership in support of more collaborative information sharing and decision-making in their local community following the summit