



## **Raising the Profile Project**

### **Regional Community Meeting # 1 Victoria BC**

*March 16, 2017*

#### **Introduction:**

Raising the Profile Project is holding seven community-level consultations with stakeholders in the community-based seniors' services sector and organizations that support the sector. These notes summarize the discussions for Victoria meeting as part of our commitment to participants, but they are not exhaustive. The key learnings and recommendations for action from the seven consultations will be presented at the Raising the Profile for Seniors Provincial Summit in November 2017.

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

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

- The issue and topics are relevant for us
- We should include discussions of housing for seniors
- Yes, we need over-arching coordination and support for our efforts
- The situation looks very different for First Nations communities – additional jurisdictional challenges
- We should also consider the spaces within which we provide our services so that they are appropriate for the people we serve
- Many of our efforts use a Eurocentric approach to aging. We should think about this through different cultural lenses

#### **Relationship between healthcare and Community-Based Seniors Sector:**

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

- Seniors agencies are doing 80% of what seniors need to stay well. Healthcare only provides 20%, so there are great benefits to be had by working more closely together;
- We need a common language. Some key terms are: fragility, isolation, evaluation, vulnerability, independence, return on investment, acute utilization

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

- Developing a shared vision and evaluating our impact against that vision
- Working across silos and generations
- Engage the people we serve in communicating what we do and what impact we have
- Work across sectors to engage business, education, philanthropy and community stakeholders



**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)?

- Carry out a provincial communications strategy that links decision-makers with community hubs that could be online
- Link with education institutions to integrate family programming and integrate senior's issues into community service staff training;
- Engage the private sector more, such as by asking businesses to volunteer and raise their profile
- Bring academics to facilitate research and evaluation that demonstrates value
- Communicate at a simple level and without jargon
- Build understanding of what "aging" is and seek new and less stigmatized language to describe the natural process of gaining experience

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

- Create opportunities for dialogue between health authorities and local governments to find leverage points that benefit both
- Carry out consultations that cross sectors so that more are informed even if they are not working directly on senior's issues
- Have greater and more frequent contact with local and provincial politicians
- Build a shared vision for which we can all advocate (even when we're in competition)
- Promote political action (including voting) among our clients

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

- Work together towards collective impact, and document our successes so all participating agencies benefit
- Build trust, collaboration and partnerships with other like-minded agencies
- Secure more sustainable funding
- Get support from Island Health to carry out research and evaluation and to build these skills within our agencies.
- Build a shared data framework based on a common vision
- Develop and operate social enterprises to generate money and engage our clients

**Urban / Rural and remote:** How do gaps vary from community to community? How do we better align resources with needs?

- In rural areas, people can be isolated by the size of their property
- Need to improve relationship of non-native service providers doing outreach to First Nations communities. Ongoing issues from Residential Schools include feelings of shame, fear of making mistakes and reluctance to demand equitable services due to continually living with discrimination
- Research and address funding inequities for seniors living on First Nations communities
- Community Resource Directories can help people going from rural to urban setting and back



### Funding: what changes are needed in how funding is provided to the sector and its agencies?

- RFP process discourages collaboration – there are modified approach that could be used
- Seniors programs need long term funding and decisions about renewal should give agencies enough time to carry out their due diligence with staff and contractors
- Grant and report writing and evaluation are good things, but take time. Shared reporting approaches would make it simpler for agencies
- Seniors agencies should be able to access funding that builds our capacity – for example, to develop a social enterprise, train our own staff or other agency staff about senior’s services
- Focus of seniors funding could be linked to our ability to help people live at home and thrive

### What could be better? What are the most important improvements that you would like to see?

- More recognition and resource for LGBTQ seniors in our communities
- More supports to address elder abuse
- Better training in community resources for staff in residential care homes
- More cultural awareness and respect for our diverse senior’s population
- More intergenerational interaction
- Better engagement with health care providers so they can “prescribe” our programs for their patients
- More health system navigators to help seniors get the care they need
- Use “thrive” as our goal rather than “quality of life.”

### Next Steps:

- From now until early May we will be holding consultations in Kelowna, Nelson, Prince George, Vancouver and Surrey, building on the two consultations we already did in Victoria and Nanaimo.
- At the end of the seven consultations we will prepare a written report and graphic illustration summarizing what we learned, 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. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 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.