



# Granisle Healthy Lunches Program

April 2017

## Program Description

The [Village of Granisle](#) is a very small community (population of ~ 350) in Northern B.C. (near Smithers) where seniors make up 2/3 of the population, many of whom live alone.

The Granisle Healthy Lunches Program was a hugely popular program that ran for two years (2014-2016) and provided community lunches to approximately 60-75 people (most of whom were seniors) every four to six weeks in the Village of Granisle. Different groups took turns hosting the lunches at various locations and supplying the volunteers. Seniors would get a free hot meal and a chance to socialize and connect. Seniors were able to access information on health and nutrition and local health nurses provided talks on health-related topics. Extra meals were delivered to vulnerable seniors who were not able to leave their home to come to the lunch.

## Funding Challenges

The municipality received [Age-Friendly](#) and [IMAGINE Community Grants](#) to run the program for two years, and unfortunately, they were not able to secure funding for a third year, meaning the program ended and is not currently running. Granisle does not have a Meals on Wheels program, and while the municipality has been able to secure a few small grants to host occasional one-of lunches, the lack of a regular ongoing community meal program was felt throughout the community.

The short life span of this lunch program highlights the challenges associated with grant funding designed to fund “new” programs and the impacts the lack of sustainable and stable funding for needed services is having on communities.

## Future Plans

The community is currently trying a different approach on a more regular basis with new lunch program that would be run in partnership with the local school. The idea is for seniors to order their meal for a small fee in advance, and either eat it as part of the school lunch program, or have it delivered to their home by a student for a small fee. There are limited spots available and a few bumps in the road ahead but the program is currently running throughout May 2017 and will continue with the new school year in September of 2017.