
COLLECTING CURRENT AND RELEVANT INFORMATION FROM CITIZENS PERTAINING TO THE EIGHT DOMAINS OF THE AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES IN THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD.

Focus Groups | Collecting Information from Citizens on the 8 Focus Areas / Domains of the Age Friendly Communities

Objective

This assessment is part of the framework around the Age Friendly Communities and its success. It's an ongoing look at the needs of the citizens, particularly the population over age 50 and those most vulnerable, to figure out what they think is needed in the community. They need to let you know how they feel about opportunities to be socially and civically engaged, employment opportunities, the ability to stay physically active and to be able to remain in their home, or at least in their community, as they age.

The 8 Focus Areas / Domains

The age friendly community movement is happening around the globe. The World Health Organization (WHO), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), and the Province of New Brunswick endorse the following eight domains as those that should be addressed when moving towards becoming an age friendly community:

Physical Environment

1. Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing

Social Environment

4. Social Participation
5. Respect and Social Inclusion
6. Civic Participation and Employment

Personal Well-being

7. Communication and Information
8. Community Support and Health Service

It is imperative to look at all eight domains when gathering data and completing an assessment of a community. It is also important for the Age-Friendly Community Committee to place an emphasis on what the citizens consider the most critical when developing their preceding 3-year action plan.

The following questionnaire will help identify what infrastructure, services, and opportunities currently exist in the community and what is needed pertaining to all eight domains of the Age-Friendly Communities.

Each section starts with a brief description of the domain and then asks what is thought to be **available now** (strengths), **what is needed** (weaknesses) and **how this might be achieved** (solutions).

Finally, you will be asked to rate the overall significance/importance of each current need in your community, using a scale of 1-10 where 10 is most critical.

1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Built environments play an important role in the health, participation, security, and safety of older adults. Outdoor spaces as well as adapted and accessible public buildings support social participation, enabling older adults to conduct their daily activities and contribute to the community. Examples of this include green and maintained spaces, enough rest areas, safe public spaces, doors, and spaces are accessible for wheeled walkers, wheelchairs, and any type of mobility enhancing device, including pedestrian-friendly streets and walkways. Natural spaces and places should maximize opportunities for healthy, active living and connections to nature, e.g., parks, trails, waterways, and community gardens. Improving access to businesses and public buildings allows older adults to enhance their independence, fosters social interaction and enables them to address their individual daily needs.

Strengths in your Community:

Weaknesses:

Solutions:

Overall Score Between 1–10: _____

*Overall Score is based on most critical being a 10.

2. Transportation

Access to affordable transportation is a major issue for older and vulnerable citizens, including those with mobility issues and disabilities. Citizens must be able to get around in their living environment in an appropriate and safe manner. An age friendly community can find ways to improve public mobility so older and vulnerable citizens can take part in social, cultural, volunteer, and recreational activities as well as carry-out daily tasks such as shopping, going to appointments and work.

Strengths in your Community:

Weaknesses:

Solutions:

Overall Score Between 1-10: _____

*Overall Score is based on most critical being a 10.

3. Housing

Older adults must have a place where they feel at home and safe. The availability, choice and cost of housing is important; communities should offer a range of independent and assisted housing options. The AFC approach makes it possible to promote projects that improve housing options and home life. Most people want to stay in their own homes as long as possible or at least in their communities.

Strengths in your Community:

Weaknesses:

Solutions:

Overall Score Between 1-10: _____

*Overall Score is based on most critical being a 10.

4. Social Participation

Participation in social life is a basic need for people, particularly older adults. Participating in family, community, cultural, economic, and political life makes it possible to maintain ties, give meaning to life and promote feelings of belonging. Participation in social and recreational life provides the chance to interact with others and establish ties with the community. For older adults, engaging in social and recreational life begins with well-publicized, accessible, and affordable social activities. The AFC approach makes it possible to support activities that bring people of all ages together and promote the establishment of intergenerational meeting places or opportunities to prevent social isolation.

Strengths in your Community:

Weaknesses:

Solutions:

Overall Score Between 1-10: _____

*Overall Score is based on most critical being a 10.

5. Respect and Social Inclusion

Elders have a great deal of knowledge and experience and are the backbone of our society. They deserve respect and need to feel included in their community as they age. Intergenerational relations serve to strengthen people's feeling of belonging. Ageism leads to exclusion and discrimination based on a person's age. The AFC approach makes it possible to fight ageism by making the public aware of support for seniors in the community.

Strengths in your Community:

Weaknesses:

Solutions:

Overall Score Between 1-10: _____

*Overall Score is based on most critical being a 10.

6. Civic Participation and Employment

Older adults must have opportunities to use their skills, knowledge, and time to contribute to society, whether it is through volunteering, civic participation, employment, or any other form of engagement. Through volunteering, people give of themselves (time, services, etc.) to contribute to family and community life. Recognizing the particular skills of working seniors is essential in order for them to feel included in society. The AFC approach makes it possible to educate people concerning the contribution of older adults and to help achieve mentorship initiatives between the generations.

Strengths in your Community:

Weaknesses:

Solutions:

Overall Score Between 1-10: _____

*Overall Score is based on most critical being a 10.

7. Communication and Information

The public, including older and vulnerable adults, need to have information on what is available to them in their community. It is important that the information is easy to understand, that it is written in plain and clear language, is up-to date and is accessible taking into consideration sight and hearing limitations. Remember, not all older adults have computer skills and therefore on-line information should not be the only method of informing the public about programs and services in the community.

Strengths in your Community:

Weaknesses:

Solutions:

Overall Score Between 1-10: _____

*Overall Score is based on most critical being a 10.

8. Community Support and Health Services

While most older adults live independently and have expressed a desire to stay at home for as long as possible to age-in-place, it is important that community support and services are available when they may need it. Community organizations can offer supports for older adults, such as home support services, foot care, transportation. The AFC approach makes it possible to work in collaboration with local partners to offer these types of services. When older adults can access the service, they need in-home or in their community it can avoid or delay them having to be hospitalized or move to a long-term care facility. Access to quality health care is critical to ensure that older adults remain healthy and independent. Identifying the health needs of the older and vulnerable adults in the community and providing input to those in the health sector on how these services could be improved, is an important aspect of an age friendly community.

Strengths in your Community:

Weaknesses:

Solutions:

Overall Score Between 1-10: _____

*Overall Score is based on most critical being a 10.