

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Angela Andrews, Health Promoter

DATE: December 2015

TOPIC

**Aging Well in Haliburton County
2008 - Present**

At the Board of Health meeting on September 17, 2015 I presented on the development of the Age-Friendly Communities Master Plan for Haliburton County. As a follow up, I have included some of the activities that have been taking place locally, since 2008.

Accessibility, Housing, Transportation and Communication were the key themes that emerged from the Aging Well Survey (2010).

Some of the successes the committee has achieved to date include:

Accessibility:

- The Ramp Project - temporary ramps being built for local businesses (stopgap.ca) There are two ramps in Haliburton village and we've had requests for more locations.
- Advocated for an automatic door opener for LifeLabs at the Haliburton Family Medical Centre.
- Bench installments throughout the four municipalities of Haliburton County.
- Arm chairs in community centers.
- Encouraged local businesses to install handrails for ease of access into store; also doorbells and signage.
- Input into the streetscape plan for Dysart et al.
- Awareness raising and taking action to support winter snow removal on sidewalks.
- Researched and identified a solution for handrails in the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavillion, which have been installed.
- Advocating for handrails in washrooms at the Pinestone Resort bathrooms, which are frequented by local older adult swimmers.

- Input into the County Official Plan with regard to wording relating to aging, seniors, age-friendly communities, and planning, (linking the connection between fall prevention and having a safe, age-friendly community).

Housing:

- Attending housing information sessions as well as economic development sessions.
- Participating in and supporting forums and research to create a county housing strategy.
- Supporting a local pool/recreation centre, which will draw in existing and new residents.
- Promoting and supporting a creative co-housing option for rural communities (Solterra Housing), which is looking to build in Haliburton County.

Transportation:

- Participating in and supporting transportation strategies for the county.
- Promoting various transportation options that are available for use and support for the Rural Transportation Options Committee in Haliburton County.

Communication/Image Management:

- Participation in Aging Outside the Box (radio show) to create a more positive image of seniors.
- Supported and initiated the establishment of the local CARP Chapter.
- Radio interviews and announcements, news releases and recognition from municipal council as the knowledge base for senior's issues and concerns.
- Delegations to council, webinar presentations, conference presentations, participation in provincial document (Finding the Right Fit: Age Friendly Community Planning http://www.seniors.gov.on.ca/en/resources/AFCP_Eng.pdf).
- Provided information to municipal candidates pre-election on age-friendly communities and the role municipalities can play (Why Health Matters at the Council Table <http://www.haliburtoncountyfoodnet.com/-health-matters-at-the-council-table.html>).
- Participation in provincial committee to develop an online age-friendly toolkit as HKPR/Aging Well Committee representative (<http://afc.uwaterloo.ca/>).

Other:

- Looking into the costs associated with surround sound systems for council chambers for those who are hearing impaired and presenting information to council.
- Identifying other concerns within council chambers that make it difficult for seniors (eg. chairs with wheels).
- Communicating with the County Accessibility Committee and keeping up to date on issues/concerns.

- Participation as a research site for a locally driven collaborative project with Public Health Units and Public Health Ontario.
- Partnership with local community groups that are striving to achieve a healthy, active community (Communities in Action Committee, CARP, Swimming Pool Initiative, RTO, Solterra Housing etc.)
- Supporting fall prevention exercise program through Closing the Gap (LHIN funded) and SMART VON exercise program to prevent falls.
- Fall prevention talks in the community when requested.

This report was prepared by Angela Andrews, Health Promoter, Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention Department