

Networks of Wellness

WEAVING TOGETHER AN ECOSYSTEM
OF WELLBEING FOR OLDER ADULTS

3-Year Healthy Aging Alberta Report | 2020-2023



A network of
community allies
for older adults.



SECTOR VISION

The community-based seniors-serving sector in Alberta empowers every older adult to age how they choose, improving their health and social outcomes.

Healthy Aging Alberta is grateful to our funding partners for their support and commitment to a co-creation approach for capacity-building and the development of a coordinated community-based seniors-serving (CBSS) sector in Alberta. HAA appreciates all partners for their contributions to supporting the broader vision to ensure equitable and reliable access to community-based opportunities and supports for older adults throughout our province for all Albertans to continue to thrive as they age.



POWERED BY UNITED WAY OF CALGARY AND AREA

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Introduction



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the spirit of our journey to promote reconciliation, we honour the truth of our shared history and acknowledge the traditional territories of the peoples of the Treaty 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10 regions of Alberta and the Métis peoples of Alberta. We also recognize the Inuit who have made their home here.

REFLECTING ON OPPORTUNITIES, GROWING FROM CHALLENGES

Opportunities to reflect on good work accomplished, established and thriving partnerships and collaborations, and future possibilities on the horizon, are few and far between when there's so much work to be done. The Healthy Aging Alberta Community Leadership Council and staff team are pleased to share this inaugural three-year report celebrating and documenting the successes and challenges of establishing the community-based seniors-serving sector in Alberta.

With United Way of Calgary and Area acting as the backbone of this important work, this herculean collective effort involves collaboration with community-based organizations' staff and volunteers, allied sector organizations, partners in government, funders, and individual seniors—each working towards a shared vision of making a better Alberta for and with the older adults who call our province home.

It has been a wild, wonderful, and challenging three-year journey, and we sincerely look forward to what we can accomplish together in the next three years!

Karen McDonald
Community Leadership Council Chair



Language Sensitivity

Healthy Aging Alberta values the perspectives of older adults, seniors, elders, and Elders in our communities. Language is fluid, and we are committed to respectful, inclusive, and culturally-sensitive communication, maintaining an ongoing dialogue with individuals, organizations, and allied partners to better understand and respect how older Albertans prefer to be referenced.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the span of three years, Healthy Aging Alberta has made meaningful progress toward building a sector of community-based seniors-serving organizations. This report presents an overview of Healthy Aging Alberta’s major functions, milestones, community impacts, and vision for the future.

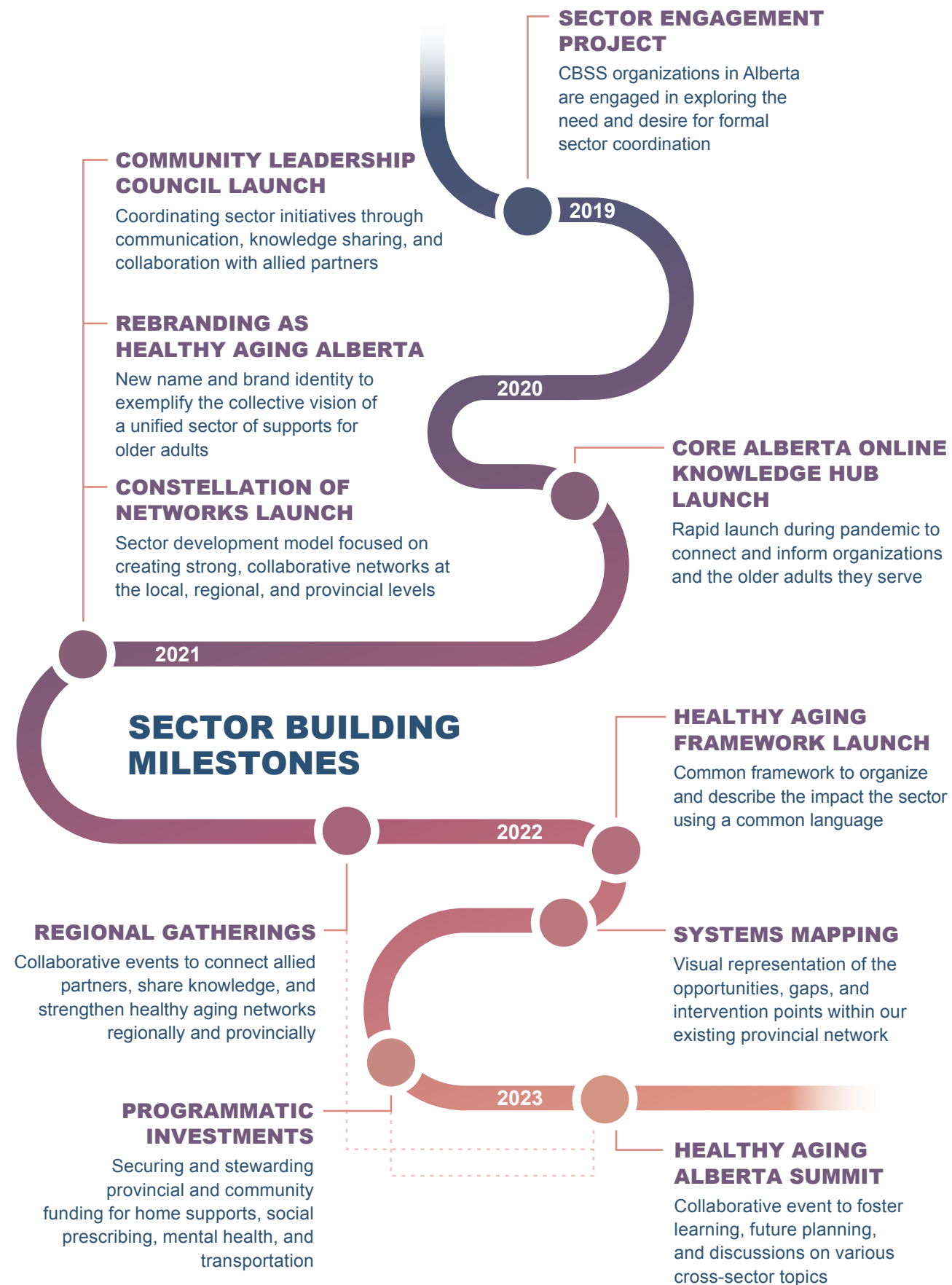
From the first organized conversations in 2019 to the upcoming Healthy Aging Summit in October 2023, Healthy Aging Alberta has achieved significant growth toward increasing capacity, infrastructure, and governance for a formal sector. Through networking, collaboration, and sharing, organizations engaging and supporting older adults are seeing the benefits of an integrated sector.

Healthy Aging Alberta is encouraged by our advancement in improving collective action to address issues and priorities affecting older adults. With a focus on amplifying the voice, visibility,

and value of community-based seniors-serving organizations and the work they do, Healthy Aging Alberta has laid a strong foundation for sustained sector growth and innovation.

As Healthy Aging Alberta continues to evolve, future phases aim to promote further investment in non-medical community-based services for older adults and social prescribing programming as well as a regional approach to unified sector development and capacity-building.

With a focus on the social determinants of healthy aging, Healthy Aging Alberta is interlacing the strong network of wellness that exists in rural and urban communities across the province into a tapestry of empowerment, support, and overall well-being for older Albertans.





By Community for Community



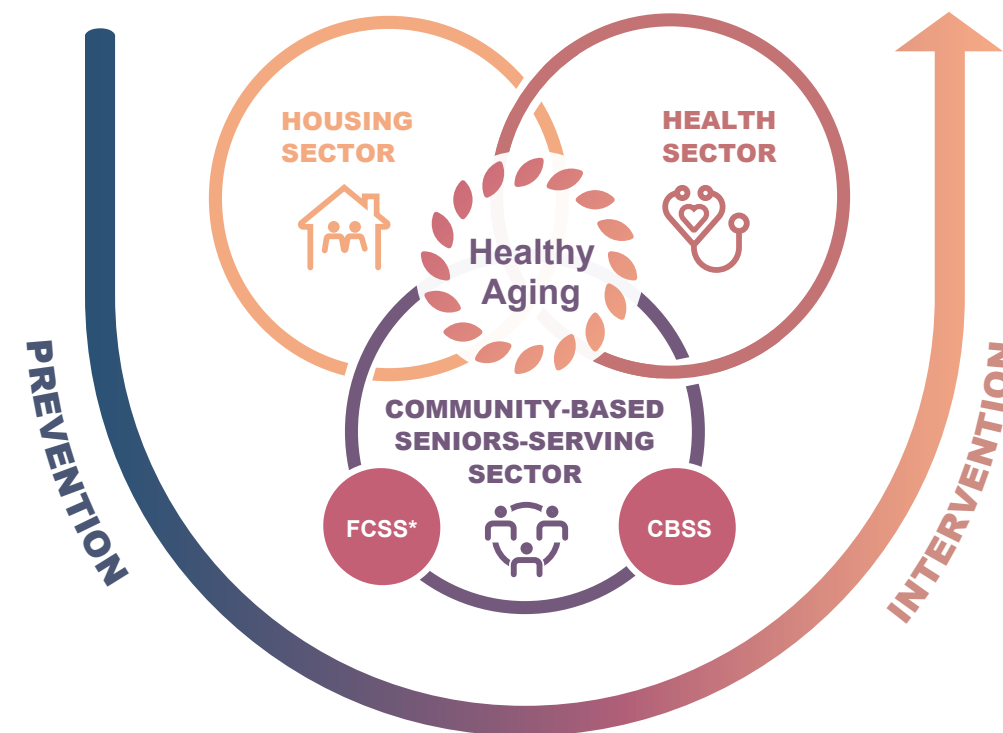
Healthy Aging Alberta is **by community for community**. This symbol is used throughout the report to highlight activities that embody this integral approach.

HEALTHY AGING ALBERTA

Healthy Aging Alberta (HAA) is a network of community-based seniors-serving (CBSS) organizations and partners dedicated to improving the lives of older adults in Alberta. HAA's mission is to unite and coordinate organizations that serve older adults, empowering them to age on their own terms while enhancing their health and social outcomes. Like a tapestry, we become stronger when we weave our knowledge, expertise, and passion together.

The vision for this work is to make Alberta one of the best places in the world to grow older by connecting community-based organizations focused on the social determinants of health for older adults with larger systems such as healthcare, housing, social supports, and transportation. Establishing the CBSS sector as an essential pillar in the continuum of support for older adults is critical to ensuring healthy aging across our province, as nearly all older adults want to age in their own communities and homes.

COMMUNITY BASED SERVING SECTORS



*Family Community and Social Services

Approaches to integrating healthcare and community-based supports are essential to enable Albertans to age in their homes and communities and lower the risk of seeking hospitalization and/or long-term care.

“**Research shows that the social determinants can be more important than health care or lifestyle choices in influencing health.**

For example, numerous studies suggest that social determinants of health account for between 30-55% of health outcomes. In addition, estimates show that the contribution of sectors outside health to population health outcomes exceeds the contribution from the health sector.

-World Health Organization, 2023

”

Through network coordination, collaboration, shared learning, and provincial-level conversations around healthy aging using a common framework for action, HAA strives to create communities where older adults are supported, engaged, and valued for their contributions to our broader society.

Through the Healthy Aging Framework (HAF), a tool created to strategize, assess, and describe the impact of numerous initiatives and offerings within our integrated support models and regional

community networks, HAA aims to align with the determinants of healthy aging which are based on the social determinants of health.

Led by the Community Leadership Council (CLC) and managed by United Way of Calgary and Area (UWCA) through the HAA staff team, this initiative is guided by principles of collaboration, by community for community, inclusivity, flexibility, and an action-oriented approach focused on incremental successes.

The network: **3,180 individuals across the province** – part of the CBSS sector or allies from other sectors



A defined sector and framework to support Determinants of Healthy Aging in Alberta.

HAA'S OBJECTIVES INCLUDE:

Improving sector capacity and infrastructure through a Constellation of Networks to engage and activate assets and meet the needs of older adults in Alberta

Building a strong CBSS sector while improving service delivery and system integration

Amplifying the voice, visibility, and value of CBSS organizations and the work they do

Improving collective action to address priorities and issues affecting older adults

OUR APPROACH

By weaving a network of non-medical opportunities and supports for older adults, HAA connects sector organizations, strengthens alliances, creates an ecosystem of wellbeing that positively impacts the lives of all Albertans.



OLDER ADULTS AT THE CENTRE

At the heart of HAA's purpose are the older adults across Alberta who want to age in the right way for them. We understand the importance of centring their voices, strengths, and desires within the broader vision.



SECTOR DEVELOPMENT ROAD MAP

Based on an earlier road map created through the CBSS Sector Engagement Project and updated to align with quick shifts during the pandemic, the Sector Development Road Map was established as a phased approach to the initial activities necessary for the development of a unified and formal CBSS sector in Alberta. This included creating a “constellation of regional networks” that connects

existing collaborative efforts and networks across the province into the foundation for a galvanized provincial network with a unified voice and systems-level collaboration. The purpose of this action plan is to develop the infrastructure required for a coordinated sector and to identify unique pathways of impact through Regional Community Developers (RCDs) across Alberta.



“

When you are in the trenches, it's hard to see the big picture. **The Healthy Aging tools help us to keep our eyes on the prize.**

It is such a simple concept, but the presentation is so unique, it connects with our team and helps us to prioritize in a way we hadn't before. Thanks to (the RCD's) help, we have renewed focus and a plan for the next year to help us reach our objectives. We would have been floundering for months without this! Thank you!

”

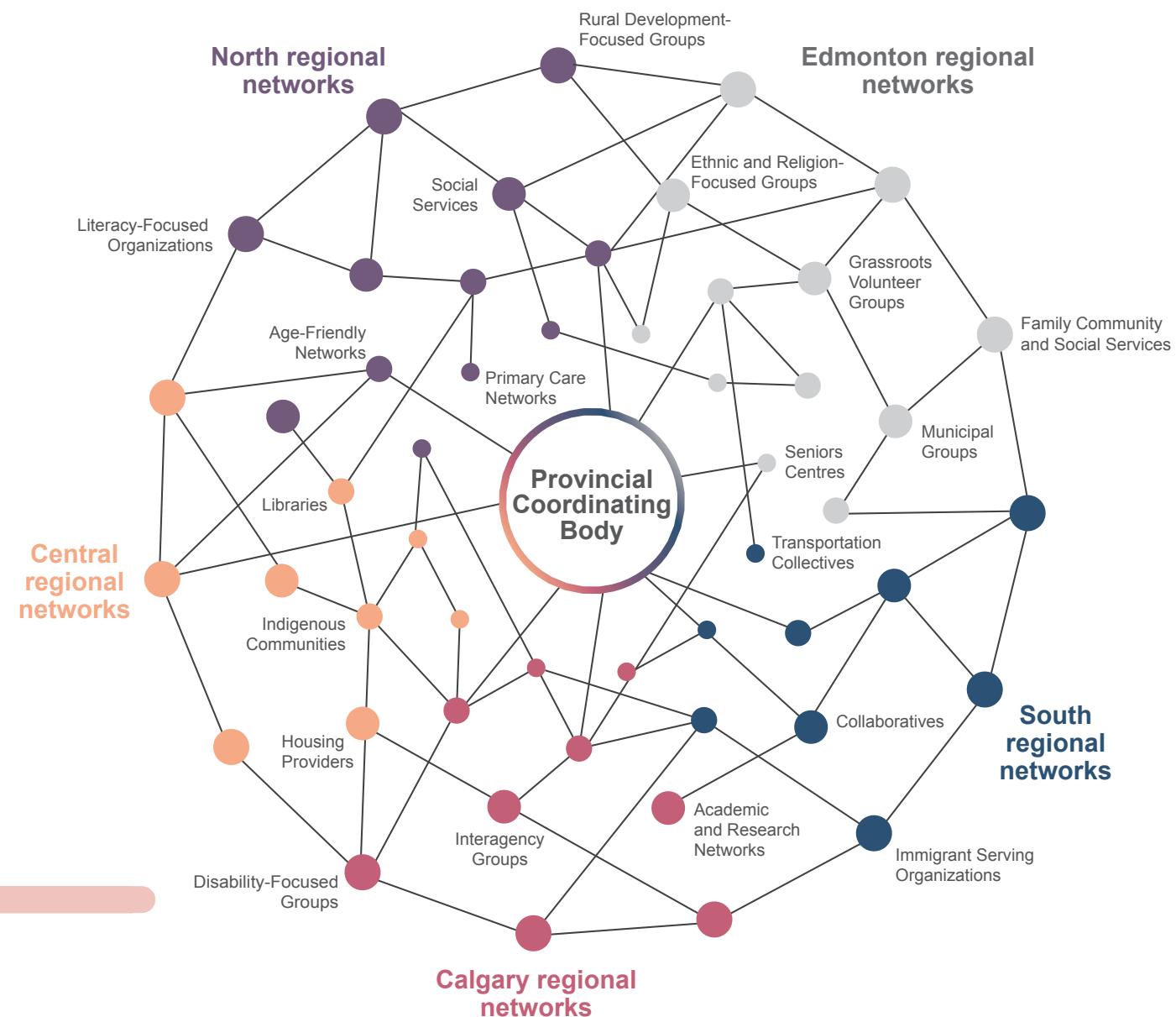
CONSTELLATION OF NETWORKS

In March 2021, HAA secured an \$800,000 Civil Society Fund Grant from the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services for CBSS regional, community, and sector development in Alberta. More than 300 CBSS organizations province-wide were consulted about using a “hub and spoke” model to support regional network and sector development as well as capacity-building around systems-level work. Strong feedback from CBSS sector members highlighted that this model was not well-aligned with the intended goals for collective impact of the sector, particularly in rural communities whose context and needs are unique and different from urban centres.

Instead, the CLC proposed a Constellation of Networks model that focuses on creating strong, collaborative networks at the local, regional, and provincial levels—woven together with infrastructure that supports open communication and collaboration across the sector. This includes a central provincial coordinating body, which is essential to support provincial alignment of regional community development in subsequent phases of sector development.

Alberta is a large and diverse province with thousands of CBSS organizations working hard to uniquely support older adults in their communities. Through HAA’s stakeholder relations, CORE Alberta, and the work of the RCDs in communities across the province, HAA has seen significant success connecting thousands of CBSS sector members and systems allied partners into the Constellation of Networks.

Trust-based relationships are the lifeblood of community development. Just as building authentic relationships takes time and the ability to make personal connections, the fulsome development of the Constellation of Networks into a functionally coordinated network will take time and collaboration with system allies, stakeholders, and community members throughout Alberta.



Weaving existing local and regional networks of organizations and people create an effective ecosystem of wellbeing for older adults. This is a non-comprehensive depiction of the different examples of networks that exist in all regions of the province.



REGIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPERS

With a focus on building sector capacity through a “By Community for Community” approach, five RCDs were activated in rural and urban locations across the province. Their goals are to support regional CBSS organizations and networks to build their capacity and improve service integration while increasing financial efficiency for interventions and programming. The RCDs have also been instrumental in leading capacity-building and knowledge-sharing activities through in-person and virtual Regional Gatherings.

With RCDs in place in the Central, Calgary, Edmonton, North, and South zones they have played a key role in activating the Constellation of Networks model, piloting the Healthy Aging Framework, and building relationships with organizations through engagement and collaboration. Sector members have been keen to use the framework to strengthen partnerships and determine the direction of their collective impact on areas such as dementia-friendly communities, elder abuse, and housing for older adults. The RCDs have had 496 one-on-one community conversations to date across the province.

“We have been grateful for HAA’s help over the past few months. Our new elder abuse program became bigger, and much faster than we expected. (The Regional Community Developer) has been able to walk us through what our program means to the community and where it should move on to next.”

-CBSS organization in Central zone

REGIONAL REPRESENTATION



Healthy Aging Alberta is committed to improving the quality of life of older adults in communities across the province



Foundations of Building a Sector



HOSTING CONVERSATIONS AROUND SECTOR DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT HEALTHY AGING | 2019

As a result of both community and government recognizing a need for a more coordinated and collaborative sector, the CBSS Sector Engagement Project was formed in 2019 through a partnership between Age-Friendly Calgary, carya, Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council (ESCC), Sage Seniors Association, and the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services (formerly Ministry of Seniors and Housing). The purpose of this co-creation approach was to:

- **Enhance** the support and care provided to older adults in Alberta
- **Enable** older adults to age comfortably in their own communities
- **Empower** older adults to remain in their homes as they grow older
- **Engage** communities to discover challenges, opportunities, and insights
- **Embrace** systems-level collaboration with related sectors, including health and housing

These conversations were inspired by United Way British Columbia's (UWBC) *Better at Home* program and Healthy Aging BC, through which the CBSS sector in BC has been in development for over a decade. UWBC has successfully developed a strong partnership with the healthcare system to adequately resource community-based services and integrate them into a holistic approach to supporting older adults.

In addition to the publication of the *What We Heard* report, key outcomes of the CBSS Sector Engagement Project included a desire to develop a formal sector as well as designing a phased road map to accomplish that goal.

26 conversations were held with **188 participants** from CBSS organizations in **16 communities** throughout Alberta



PANDEMIC SUPPORT FOR OLDER ADULTS | 2020

The unexpected realities of the pandemic not only necessitated quick shifts in multiple health sectors, they highlighted gaps in community-based service delivery and access to supports for older adults. With the impacts on older adults, their families, and caregivers being felt in communities across the province, the community-development approach envisioned during the 2019 CBSS sector engagement conversations was delayed in favour of an urgent pandemic response.

The pandemic **highlighted gaps** in community-based service delivery and access to supports for older adults



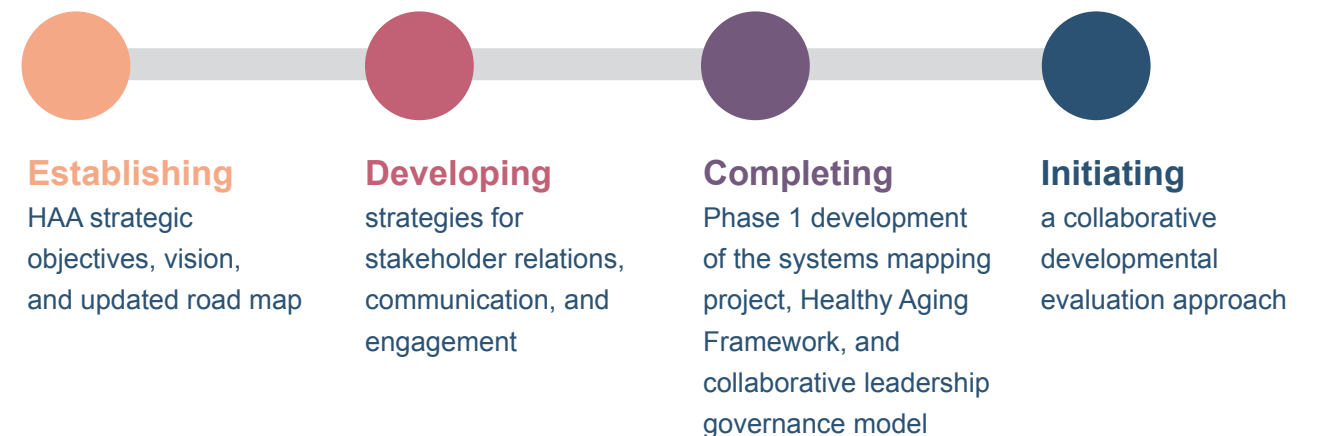
INTERIM COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP COUNCIL | 2020

Motivated by the heightened need for CBSS organizations to effectively communicate, share knowledge, and collaborate with each other during the pandemic, an interim Community Leadership Council - Pandemic Response (CLC-PR) was established in April 2020. Made up of the original four CBSS sector leaders involved in the CBSS

Sector Engagement Project, as well as Lethbridge Seniors Citizen Organization and Golden Circle in Red Deer, the CLC-PR coordinated with allied partners in the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services to guide the sector initiative while adapting to the complex and agile demands of pandemic response provincewide.

FOUNDATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR CBSS SECTOR INITIATIVE | 2020

As a continuation of initial discussions and goals identified during the CBSS Sector Engagement Project, the CLC-PR moved forward with the first phases of various sector strategic planning goals including:





UNITED WAY OF CALGARY AND AREA TAKES ON BACKBONE ROLE | 2020

To steer formal governance and execute on the strategic direction of the CLC-PR, UWCA stepped into a backbone role in April 2020. Following the lead of the successful Healthy Aging model in BC and the work of UWBC, UWCA leveraged their

social innovation and systems change expertise to launch Healthy Aging CORE Alberta (CORE) and support CBSS organizations to coordinate around offering integrated community-based supports to older adults during the pandemic and beyond.

SYSTEMS ALLIES AND STAKEHOLDER STRATEGY

As a way to break down silos, encourage networking and collaboration, and increase the visibility of the value of CBSS organizations' across the province, HAA adopted a stakeholder relations strategy. By fostering a network and community of allies supporting older adults in Alberta, in collaboration with the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services, HAA gained the ability to create functional relationships both within the CBSS sector and

among allies in other sectors. A stakeholder relations strategy is essential to form a cohesive voice to speak to the challenges and opportunities of healthy aging on a provincial level—especially as the initiative grows and becomes more complex. This collective voice also articulates the unique value and role of the CBSS sector in the continuum of support that empowers healthy aging.

STRATEGIC GUIDANCE OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP COUNCIL | 2021

Growing from their interim role during the pandemic and the initial establishment of Healthy Aging Alberta (HAA), a permanent Community Leadership Council (CLC) was established in the fall of 2021 to support the establishment of long-term strategic objectives for the sector. Through providing direction and oversight to operations and project-based teams, the CLC guides all strategic decisions of HAA, informed by community consultations with the sector. Along with delivering reports to funders and sector members at large, the CLC fosters and maintains collaborative working relationships with co-creation partners, sector allied partners, advisory groups, and regional networks.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



Karen McDonald
Executive Director
Sage Seniors Association,
Edmonton



Lisa Stebbins
Chief Program Officer
Carya, Calgary



Sheila Hallett
Executive Director
Edmonton Seniors
Coordinating Council



Sian Jones
Issue Strategist
Age-Friendly Calgary
The City of Calgary



Rob Miyashiro
Executive Director
Lethbridge Senior Citizens
Organization



Monica Morrison
Former Executive Director
Golden Circle Seniors
Resource Centre, Red Deer



Luana Bussieres
Executive Director
St. Aidan's Society,
Fort McMurray



Larry Mathieson
President and CEO
Unison, Medicine Hat



Blake Eves
Director
Magrath Seniors Centre,
Lethbridge



Doreen Williams
Executive Director
Circle of Wisdom Elders
and Seniors Centre, Calgary



Shantal Ottenbreit
Community Resource Worker
Community Development,
City of Medicine Hat

To ensure the CLC is reflective of Alberta’s diverse older adults and the organizations that serve them, the CLC’s priority is to continue expanding our representation not only geographically, but also to include equity-deserving communities

The CLC actively participates in stakeholder relations strategy implementation as well as partnering with systems allies to inform policy and systems transformation. They represent the interests and elevate the voice of the CBSS sector around sector priorities based on community guidance, including increased investment in FCSS programs, workforce planning, and additional investment in social prescribing. Through representation at key tables, CLC has worked to position the CBSS sector as an integral delivery mechanism for non-medical supports within Alberta Health’s Continuing Care Strategy with support from the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services Seniors Division.

The primary driver that informs the CLC’s actions is community consultation. In the fall of 2021, for example, HAA hosted a community conversation event attended by over 50 network members, including CBSS organizations, government, health, and academia. HAA also conducted an online survey on sector capacity and inquired as to how those organizations continued to serve older adults during the pandemic. The data gathered was consolidated into a report and shared with systems allies to communicate sector capacity challenges that have been exacerbated by the increased complexities that older adults faced during the pandemic’s later phases.

“Funding support is needed to build capacity within community-serving organizations. Organizations are already working at capacity to serve the rapidly-growing senior population. To be asked to join collaborations takes time. The challenge is there is ‘no’ time [...] and the hamster wheel continues to spin!”

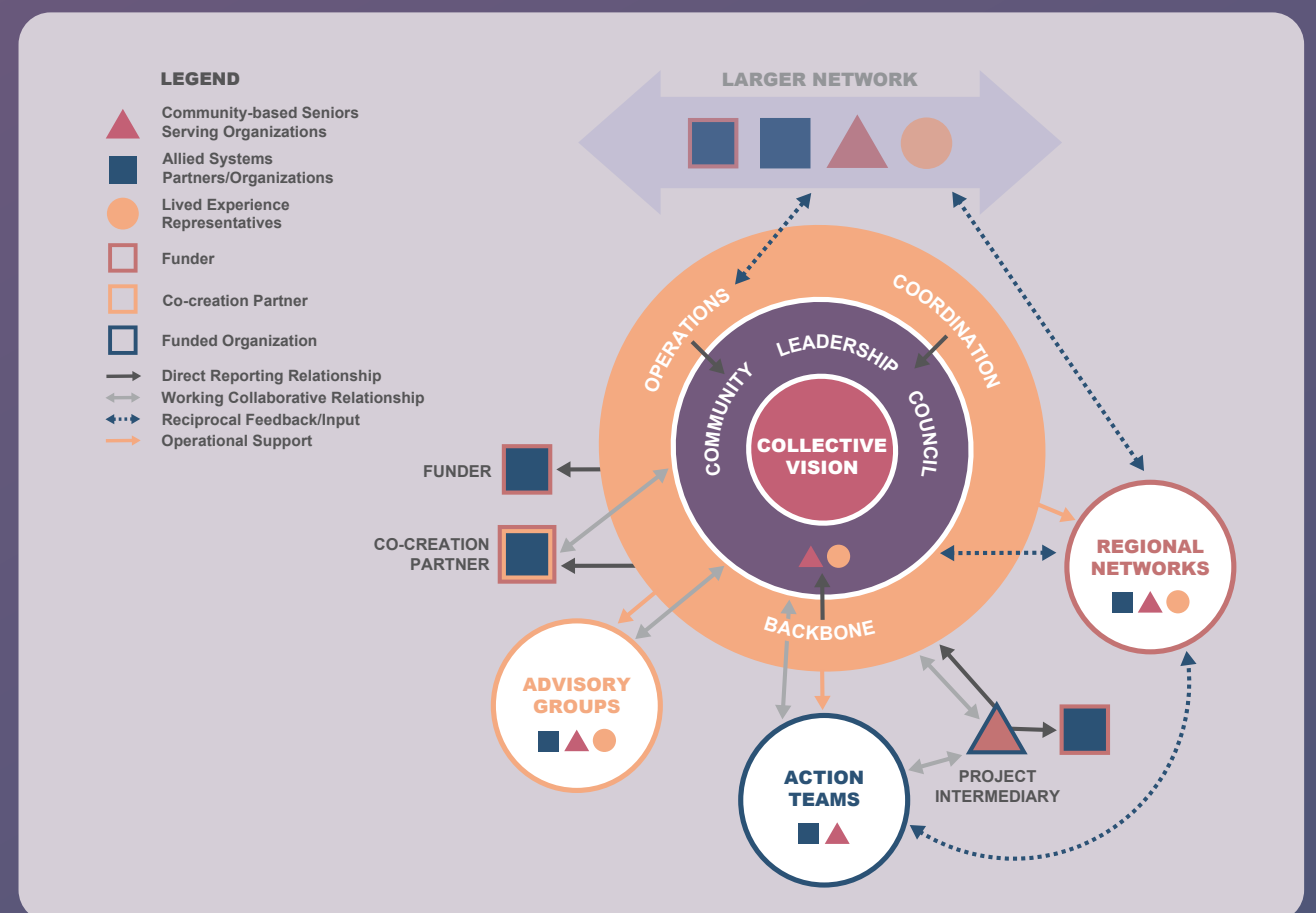
-2023 Developmental Evaluation Survey Participant

The CLC has been working to elevate the message that the CBSS sector is at capacity. Collaboration requires additional time and energy and resources need to be dedicated not only to programs and services, but to capacity-building and coordination with space and time for innovation.

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP GOVERNANCE MODEL

As HAA continued to gain traction across the province, the CLC recognized the need to establish a permanent collaborative leadership and governance model that sets the strategic direction for the initiative and supports sector coordination. An environmental scan identified best practices and models that aligned with HAA’s strategic objectives.

The governance model is envisioned to include broad and equitable representation of CBSS organizations from across the province as well as the diversity of the older adult populations they serve. The diagram below denotes each of the model’s components and their relationships and responsibilities to each other.





Healthy Aging Highlights The City of Lethbridge

In March 2020, the Lethbridge Helping Organizations COVID-19 Response group was launched by The City of Lethbridge to strengthen collaboration by local groups to serve and support all residents. Through bi-weekly meetings and collaboration with community leaders, this initiative addressed the needs of vulnerable populations in Lethbridge, including older adults, families, children and youth, unhoused and food insecure populations, persons with disabilities, and persons with mental illness and addiction. Ultimately, Lethbridge was able to maintain low numbers of COVID-19 cases.

Outreach to isolated older adults was conducted by Lethbridge Senior Citizens Organization staff, now referred to as the Seniors System Navigation team, for in-home support programs such as Meals on Wheels, housekeeping programs, and home care from the health region. Other activities included volunteer wellness checks, neighbourhood postcard drops, and delivery of Food Bank hampers.

The existing network of CBSS organizations created by Age-Friendly Lethbridge fast-tracked service implementation and communication since the group already had a well-established collaborative relationship. This model of collaboration between CBSS organizations in Lethbridge would soon be adopted by HAA's Interim Community Leadership Council to guide the implementation of regional CBSS networks and improve sector capacity provincially.

While the pandemic response was the first time local social organizations in Lethbridge collaborated on a large scale, the outcome has been a long-term sustainable network for community supports that can be used for future city planning and response. Through online collaboration platforms, the City of Lethbridge is confident that community partners and stakeholders can communicate effectively to respond quickly in emergencies and pandemics, and collaborate to address the needs of its most vulnerable populations.

The group name changed to Lethbridge Social Helping Organizations Coalition in 2022. For its coordinated efforts and overall impact, the City of Lethbridge was recognized by the World Health Organization and United Nations on World Cities Day 2021, and mentioned in the *Frontiers in Public Health* journal article entitled, "Practical Solutions to Address COVID-19-Related Mental and Physical Challenges Among Low-Income Older Adults."



DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION APPROACH

A **developmental evaluation approach** has been designed and implemented to ensure continual assessment of progress, learnings, course correction, and quality improvement of HAA. The primary goals of this strategy include improving service integration and coordination within the sector and increasing fiscal effectiveness for interventions and programming. This approach is also focused on ensuring the sector development strategies of HAA are effective and aligned with sector member needs and community guidance.

"It has been beneficial to connect personally with representatives and hold valuable generative conversations. These allow us to gain understanding of more global (singular and cross ministry) outcomes, offer our experience at the local level regarding impact of support, and [identify] areas for growth. It feels like all levels are "actively listening" and working together on solutions to serve Albertans."

-Healthy Aging Alberta Evaluation Participant

HEALTHY AGING ALBERTA EVALUATION SURVEY | 2023

90%
think of HAA as building a strong CBSS sector that functions in a coordinated and collaborative way

75%
think of HAA as improving advocacy and collective action to address priority issues affecting older adults

66%
agree they have established new collaborations or partnerships as a result of participating in HAA

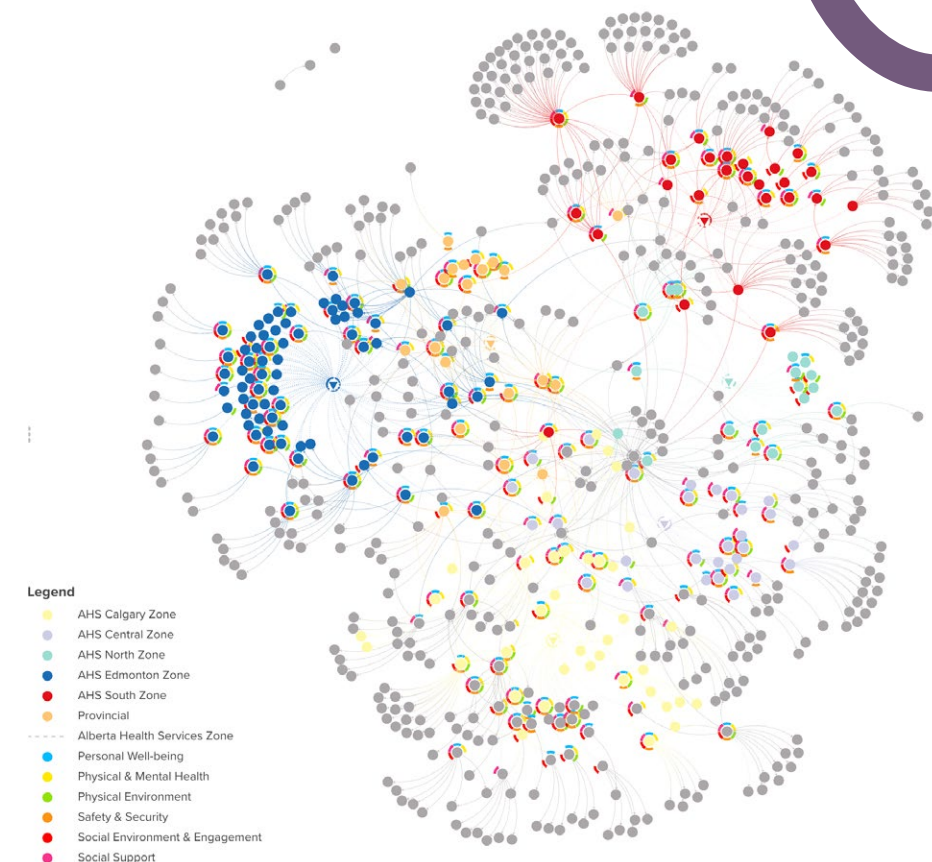
69%
agree that HAA is helping to contribute to older adults having increased awareness of available services

SECTOR SYSTEMS MAPPING

To better understand the CBSS sector network and how sector members interconnect and interact, HAA undertook a high-level systems mapping project. Sector systems mapping provides a visual representation of the assets, opportunities, gaps, and potential intervention points within our existing provincial network, enabling HAA to create a stronger, more integrated network over time. A survey was distributed to CBSS organizations across Alberta to collect and update organizational information while also gaining an understanding of the sector's overall interest and capacity to participate in future systems mapping work.

An online Sector Systems Mapping tool is currently in early-stage development. With a foundation based on the determinants of healthy aging, this tool demonstrates the potential benefits of mapping the sector and how information can be arranged and presented to better understand the complex relationships between organizations in the CBSS sector.

Through **359 survey responses from 260 different organizations**, HAA identified **163 new CBSS organizations not already in the HAA database**



This is a zoomed-out visual of the first version of the systems map as it was being developed. The second iteration of the systems map is developed based on community feedback, and will be shared in 2024.



Healthy Aging Highlights Tim's Story

Tim* is an older adult living in a small rural town. He was referred to Wild Rose Community Connections in High River by his local Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) branch. Since his community has limited transportation supports—which are often unaffordable for older adults on fixed incomes—Tim was seeking transportation for an essential medical appointment.



A Caring Connector from Wild Rose's SeniorConnexx program arranged for a volunteer driver to transport Tim to his appointment in the city. Since then, Tim has arranged transportation several times to attend both eye and heart specialist appointments. However, during this period of enhanced support, the Caring Connector noticed a shift in his behaviour.

Tim would book volunteer transportation for appointments, forget about the bookings, and then call to cancel—often on the morning of his appointment. The Caring Connector assessed that his dementia had progressed, creating a barrier to him seeking essential medical care. Tim needed increased non-medical supports to enable him to follow through with scheduling and keeping appointments.

Through the trusting relationship the Caring Coordinator has nurtured, Tim now has an ally in the community. He has gained companionship and social-emotional support, while also having his essential transportation needs met. Through collaboration with FCSS and Alberta Health Services (AHS), Tim is empowered to maintain his mental and physical health while aging in his own home—within surroundings that make him feel comfortable, happy, and safe.

The broader success of Tim's story lies in the ability for a connected network of supports to be wrapped around him like a blanket while meeting multiple non-medical needs—ultimately improving his quality of life and enabling him to stay in the home and community he loves a little longer.

**Name changed for privacy.*

CBSS Sector Engagement



COMMUNITY ACTIVATION SESSIONS | 2021

In June 2021, HAA hosted 10 online regional Community Activation Sessions. Older adult-serving organizations and allies across Alberta came together to learn about this community-based initiative, provide input into its evolution, and become active participants in systems change and

sector development. These sessions provided an opportunity for CBSS organizations and allied partners to have critical conversations about how promising practices, especially during a global pandemic, had severe implications for older adults.



Virtual Community Activation Sessions were attended by more than **350 participants** from across Alberta

In May and June 2022, **5 in-person Regional Gatherings** and **1 virtual event** were attended by a total of **299 sector allies** across Alberta



HEALTHY AGING REGIONAL GATHERINGS | 2022-2023

In May and June 2022, HAA held six Regional Gatherings, including in-person gatherings in each of the five Alberta regions and one virtual gathering. Their purpose was to support CBSS professionals and allied partners, facilitate mutual learning, and strengthen healthy aging networks at regional and provincial levels. Each Regional Gathering featured standard content, including an overview of HAA, an orientation on the Healthy Aging Framework (HAF), a presentation on the CBSS Sector Systems Map, and discussions on HAA's priorities for the 12 to 24 months following the gatherings.

themes align with current and future funding to expand the Social Prescribing Provincial Model in ten communities as well as up to ten assisted transportation projects.

The Regional Gatherings continue to achieve their purpose as participants gain insight into HAA, provide input for the development of the HAF and the CBSS Sector Systems Map, identify priorities and challenges, share regional actions, and offer positive feedback on the overall value of the gatherings.

In 2023, eight in-person Regional Gatherings were held in communities across the province, including Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Fort Saskatchewan, Calgary, Provost, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat. Among the most popular topics of conversation during these sessions were social prescribing, transportation, and collaboration between CBSS organizations and systems allies. These major

“It was amazing to see the amount of work being put into healthy aging initiatives. As an emerging social worker, many of the concerns that were discussed today are conversations that have been had within my education. However, this is the first situation where I have seen plans in action.”

-Regional Gathering Participant

“ I love this whole piece around collaboration. We have to work together and not always compete for funding. If we’re collectively working together then we reduce competition and that will hopefully improve quality of care for seniors. ”

- Community Activation Session Participant

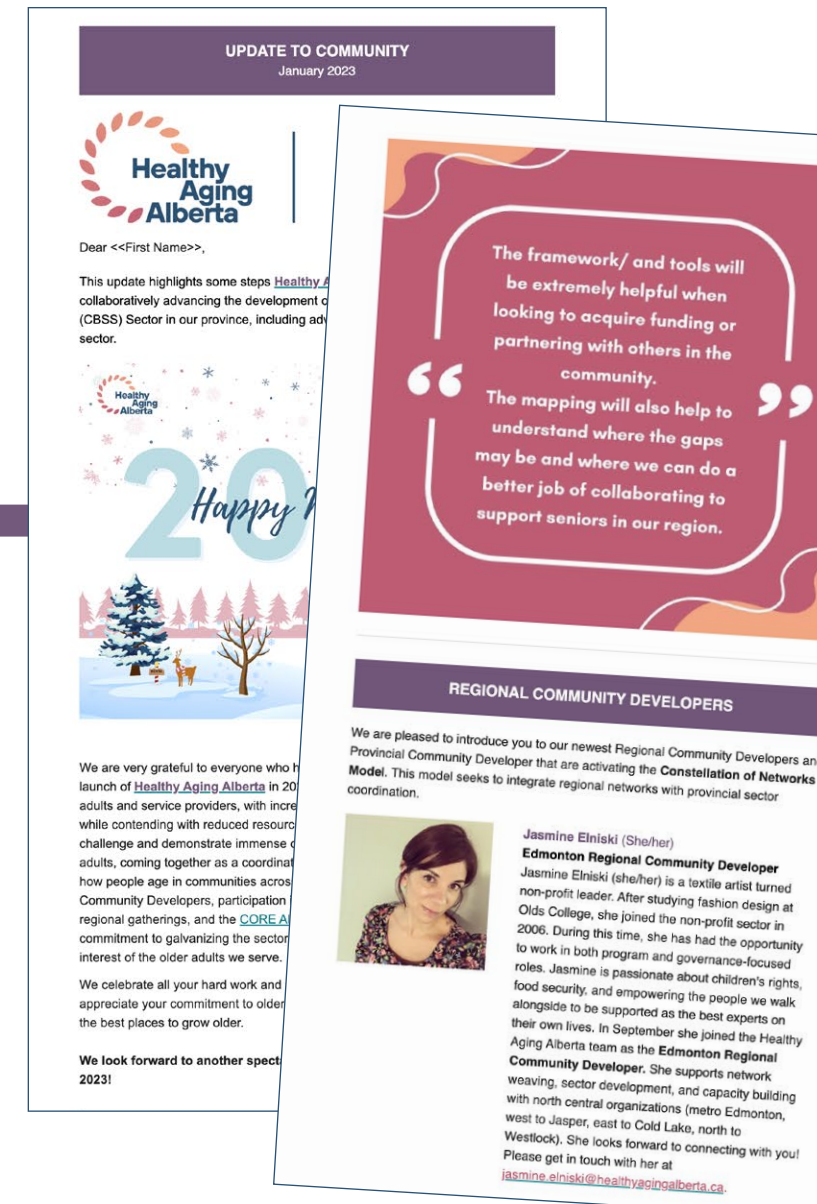


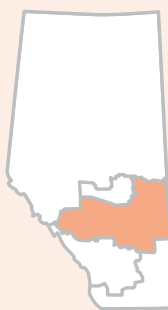
HAA NEWSLETTERS POPULAR FOR SECTOR COMMUNICATION

To further network development and encourage sector involvement, HAA has adopted a communications strategy involving regular newsletters and other written communications. General newsletters are sent regularly and typically include news, resources, training and funding opportunities, new programs, and content featured on CORE. Other newsletter topics include HAA updates to the community, sector surveys, emergency updates, upcoming events features, and other special mailouts.

The current HAA newsletter readership is close to 2,800 subscribers and growing monthly. The most “clicked” pages are the Funding Opportunities, Training and Events, Groups, and Resources sections. This site usage demonstrates users’ strong interest in organizational development, collaboration, and a Community of Practice (CoP) capacity-building approach.

CBSS organizations and sector allies have commented on how **newsletter content keeps them up to date** with the recent posts on CORE and is an easy entry point of access to HAA





Healthy Aging Highlights Bashaw and District Support Services Association

With a focus on supporting rural aging in central Alberta, Bashaw and District Support Services Association (BDSSA) is bringing healthy aging opportunities to older adults in their community. With non-medical support services ranging from errand assistance, transportation, and social visits to outings, house maintenance, and technical system navigation, their *Senior Rural Support Services* program is hitting its stride as an HAA partner and beneficiary of Phase 1 Provincial Community and Home Supports Funding.

Development of their program has provided BDSSA with connections to service providers and partners throughout the province, insight into provincial planning and goals, professional support that is typically unaffordable for their organization, and a true voice at the table in developing services in rural areas to support healthy aging. With longer-term funding stewarded by HAA, BDSSA has the resources to further develop and test components of their non-medical supports and assess results to determine areas for greater impact on older adults' quality of life.

BDSSA's partnership with HAA resulted in a rewarding experience among organizations by enabling connections, resource sharing, and collaboration. New relationships with CBSS organizations have uncovered many opportunities to align policies and training, compare data, and build from lessons learned to create a comprehensive network of non-medical supports for older adults in rural Alberta.

Through building connections with their local RCD, BDSSA has also formed a deeper partnership with other local communities, such as Donalda and Alix. As an example of HAA's Constellation of Networks model, regional relationship-building has empowered them to creatively problem-solve, conduct joint marketing and recruitment initiatives, and share resources to support their clients to grow older with dignity in their communities.

“This process has been a breath of fresh air and has provided us hope and clarity in what the future for aging in Alberta can look like. We have also thoroughly enjoyed our new program partnership with our project partners in Camrose. [...] Our HAA reps have been tremendous in working alongside...WITH us. It's nice to see the human side to the business we do and to see the genuine care they take in their role to support this work.”

- Bashaw and District Support Services Association

CORE Alberta Central to Sector Development



URGENT LAUNCH OF HEALTHY AGING CORE ALBERTA PLATFORM | 2020

In the *What We Heard* report, participants identified the need for a centralized knowledge hub to support service navigation, information sharing, and collaboration between CBSS organizations. Replicated from the Healthy Aging CORE BC platform, Healthy Aging CORE Alberta (CORE) was launched on May 10, 2020, in partnership with the UWBC population health team. UWBC created this capacity-building and networking tool in response to BC's sector development needs, with plans for replication across Canada to support a national CBSS sector development movement.

The Healthy Aging Collaborative Online Resources and Education (CORE) platform is a free member-based digital knowledge and learning portal designed to enable sector development by connecting CBSS organizations to each other

and their allied partners. In addition to sharing knowledge and resources, CORE enables capacity-building, networking, and collaboration among CBSS organizations.

Through a collaborative effort, the CLC, UWCA, the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services, UWBC, AHS, the Government of Canada, and CBSS organizations and system partners, such as 211 and Alberta Blue Cross, CORE quickly became a virtual connection space for CBSS organizations and allies across the province to share a wealth of guidance and information, access provincial experts, and coordinate training and events.

To meet urgent demand in 2020, CORE was launched in **4 weeks** instead of the 8-month timeline proposed before the pandemic

SECTOR-BUILDING AND CONNECTING THROUGH CORE

While CORE was an effective tool used to communicate critical issues and immediate actions arising from the pandemic, the platform continues to function as an essential and specialized knowledge hub for organizations focused on the well-being of older adults in Albertans, connecting organizations that support and advance older adult well-being in Alberta.

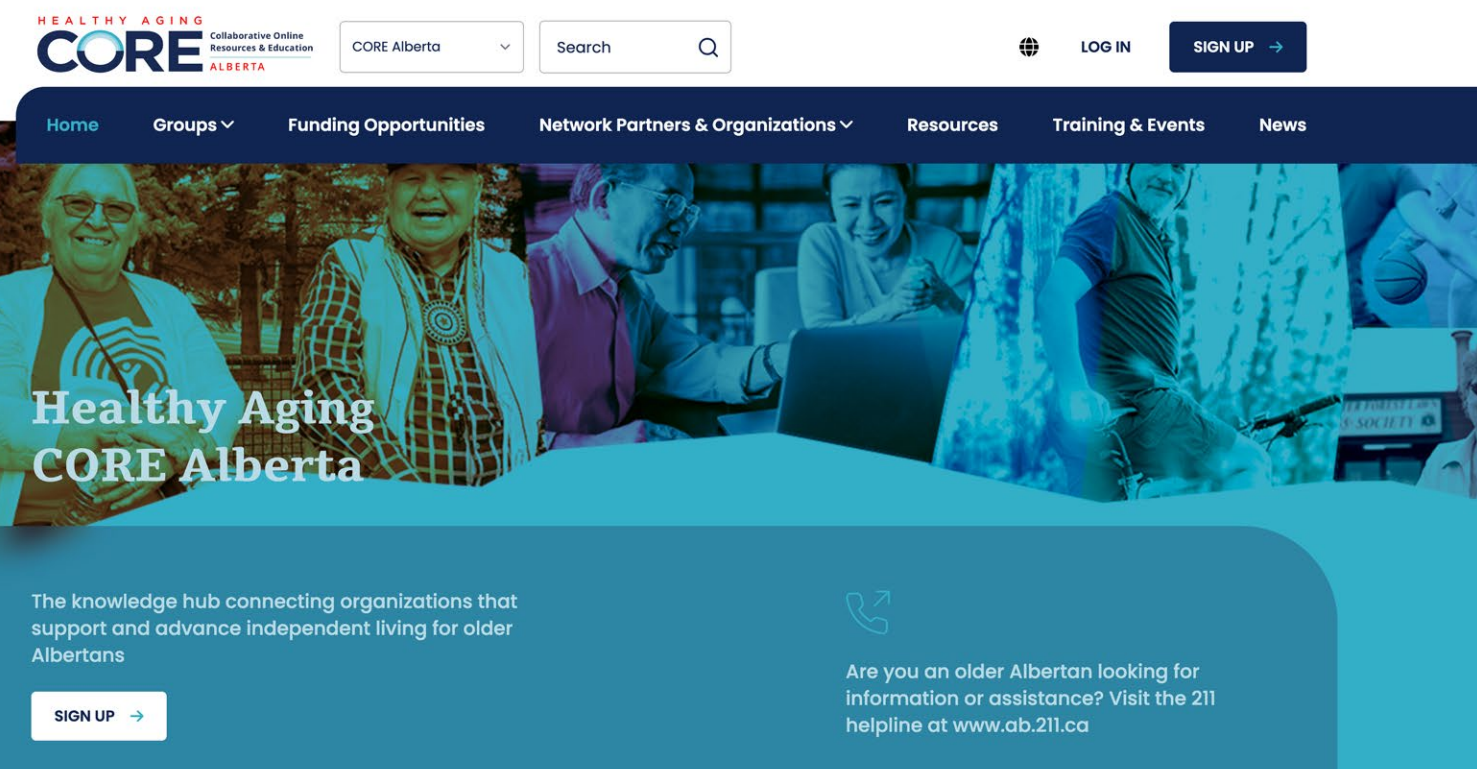
CORE enables sector development goals by:

- Weaving together a network of CBSS organizations and sector-allied partners
- Highlighting and communicating key issues and opportunities within the CBSS sector
- Creating a mechanism for organizations from all regions to engage with HAA
- Providing a platform for collaboration, shared resources, and capacity building

- Encouraging and facilitating shared events, gatherings, and discussions
- Enabling access to emergency support resources, bulletins, and workshops

One user shared how CORE has impacted their work with a coalition:

“Without CORE...we wouldn't be reaching out to as many groups or as many individuals to keep that coalition strong and headed in the right direction. So, it's definitely enhanced our ability to integrate with other groups and to work with them, not just one-on-one, but en masse to reach our own goals.”



CORE is among HAA's most effective and broadly reaching capacity-building and sector development tools

CORE ENGAGEMENT | 2021-2023

To measure engagement and the overall impact of CORE, surveys and interviews were conducted in 2021 and 2022. In its first year, CORE had approximately 860 members and subscribers active on the platform. As of 2023, CORE has grown to 1,864 members, over 4,000 pieces of site content, an average of 8,000 monthly site visitors, and 3,000 monthly page views.

“I feel like [CORE] does [...] have that ability to connect people around the province in different disciplines, which to me is really, really critical when caring for an older person. There’s not one discipline. There’s not one agency that can do that. Everybody needs to work together in order to provide the best service and the best support to older people.”

-CORE Member

CORE GROUPS

CORE groups are initiated by members of CBSS organizations and systems allies. These groups collaborate on key issues, host events, share resources, and push for sector development. Some groups are the primary space for project work and collaboration. Other groups support broader sector engagement, networking, and resource sharing. They provide diverse and rich mutual learning opportunities, create an inviting space for meaningful relationships, and contribute to a more connected and integrated sector. As of May 2023, there are 18 active groups.

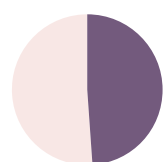
CORE groups serve various functions, as the examples below illustrate:

- **Working groups:** Connecting People & Community for Living Well is a provincial initiative within AHS that works to enhance capacity within multi-sector community teams to provide quality care and support for those living in the community such as older adults impacted by dementia or frailty. The initiative uses the CORE platform to invite a wider audience to attend meetings, share information and resources, and store important materials such as meeting recordings and slides.
- **Communities of Practice:** The Intergenerational Linkages CoP group brings together committed service providers and community members who desire to collaboratively build capacity to develop intergenerational initiatives in their organizations and communities. The group hosts conversation cafés and panel presentations where ideas are exchanged and lessons learned are shared.
- **Discussion and information sharing:** The Government of Alberta Seniors Programs Resource Guide group allows service providers to learn about this continually updated resource guide that enables them to assist older adults in applying for financial assistance programs. The group hosts training and circulates other resource materials as they are developed.

YEAR ONE CORE SURVEY RESULTS



89% indicated they were **MORE AWARE OF INFORMATION, RESOURCES, AND TRAINING** related to supporting older adults

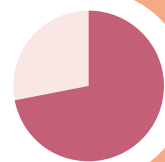


49% indicated they had **CONTACTED ANOTHER ORGANIZATION**

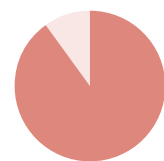
89% indicated they felt **CONNECTED TO A LARGER NETWORK**



72% indicated they had **collaborated or had plans to COLLABORATE WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**



55% indicated they **IMPROVED THE SERVICES** their organization provides



90% of participants in CORE Groups **FOUND FORUMS USEFUL**





CORE EVENTS

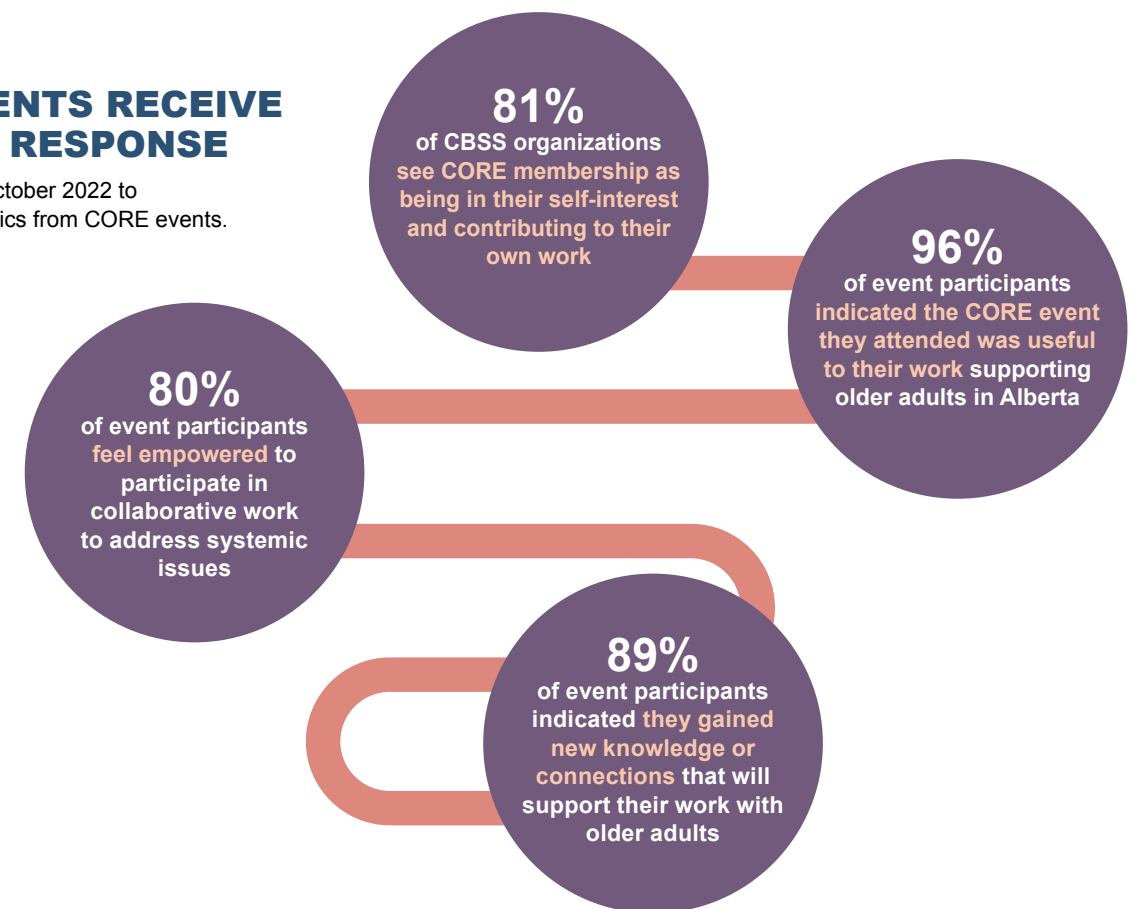
CORE Events are hosted by the HAA team and CORE Groups. To date, **HAA has hosted 23 CORE events and 63 CORE group-led events.** These offerings develop the capacity of the sector, share key information on initiatives, talk about new movements and strategies in the sector, build on issues CORE groups are addressing, and give valuable networking opportunities for organizations across the province. The CORE Events and Trainings calendar also shares any other sector capacity-building events and conferences related to the work members can attend. Some of these events are national and international, allowing for connection from a global perspective.

“CORE allows us to get information out in a more sustainable way. People can access training whenever they need. I was worried about losing the in-person connection, but now I can see how many more people we can touch this way, I can see the benefit. I felt more connected during the pandemic than I did when we only met in person.”

-CORE Event Participant

CORE EVENTS RECEIVE POSITIVE RESPONSE

Based on HAA's October 2022 to August 2023 statistics from CORE events.



“

The Intergenerational Community of Practice on CORE Alberta is a place for anyone considering or currently doing Intergenerational work in Alberta. Healthy Aging Alberta has made our province-wide impact possible by creating an accessible platform to support Intergenerational work everywhere.

LINKages Society of Alberta focuses on Intergenerational work throughout Canada and other parts of the world. Due to our presence in CORE Alberta, more people can tap into the webinars and training workshops offered by LINKages. CORE is the place to go if you're looking for education and expertise in serving seniors; LINKages is the place to go if you want to connect youth and seniors and learn how to make it happen. CORE makes it easier for organizations to find support for their Intergenerational ideas and programs. We are really better together.

”

-CORE Group Lead

CORE EVENT SPOTLIGHT | FRAILTY SERIES | 2021-2022

From November 2021 to April 2022, five CORE Alberta groups collaborated to organize a series of sessions addressing the topic of frailty. This initiative attracted 450 registrants and marked a significant success for CORE and HAA. The objectives of the CORE Frailty Series included preparing for COVID recovery, fostering a collaborative space for various organizations, and facilitating interactions among CORE Groups.

The survey results from 77 respondents reflect the positive impact of the CORE Frailty Series:

97% of participants indicated **the event was useful** to their work supporting older adults in Alberta

89% of participants indicated **they gained new knowledge or connections** that will support their work with older adults

90% of participants **feel empowered to participate in collaborative work** to address systemic issues

89% of participants **feel like they belong to the CBSS sector network** in Alberta

This CORE Frailty Series paves the way for future collaborative series to flourish on CORE. Connections formed during these events can lead to new programs, aligning complementary strengths and collaborative problem solving.

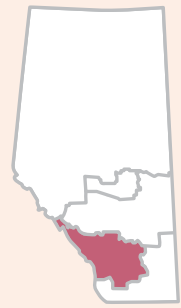
CORE 2.0

During the fall of 2022, HAA collaborated with UWBC to roll out an upgraded version of the Healthy Aging CORE Alberta (CORE) platform with enhanced functionalities and user experience. CORE Alberta is now connected to both CORE BC and CORE Canada. With seamless integration to switch between each platform, users can visit the other sites easily and enjoy benefits from all three. New engagement features provide increased opportunities for user collaboration across the sites as well as organizational capacity-building.

CORE 2.0 is more visually appealing and streamlined for better user interaction and ease of use. CORE users can now receive activity notifications and directly message other members. These enhancements have also enabled RCDs to effectively connect with users in their regions. As the CORE Alberta platform continues to evolve, it will continue to support growth, innovation, and ongoing community development and connections among CBSS organizations and systems allies both regionally and provincially.

The **new CORE options** and features provide increased opportunities for user collaboration across the site and organizational capacity-building



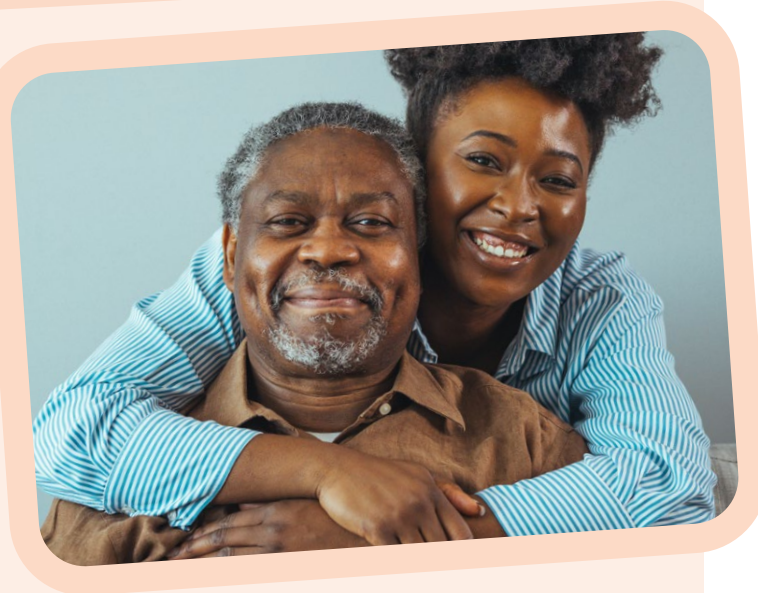


Healthy Aging Highlights Bridge to Oasis Foundation

The Bridge to Oasis Foundation (BTO) in Calgary was founded in 2020 and is dedicated to enhancing the lives of seniors from diverse countries in Africa and the Caribbean currently living in communities across Alberta. Their central goal is to enable these older adults to age comfortably by reconnecting them with their culture, heritage, and peer support systems. By empowering African and Black seniors to embrace the enriching and purposeful lives they knew in their youth, BTO seeks to make a lasting impact on their overall well-being. With a focus on healthy living, engaging relationships, nostalgic connections, elder abuse prevention, and support with modern technologies, BTO aims to address several key aspects of senior living.

In March 2022, the Executive Director of BTO reached out to HAA in search of a partner organization for a funding application to support older adults with emergency preparedness and stable housing. The connection provided by HAA led to a successful application and the receipt of funding for BTO to implement this critical project. Since that time, BTO has been actively involved with HAA in various ways, including becoming a CORE member, attending Regional Gatherings, participating in strategic planning to include the needs of African and Black seniors when designing a shared referral system, and facilitating a session to bring the work of HAA directly to the seniors served by BTO.

Through their involvement with HAA and exposure to a variety of network weaving opportunities, BTO has successfully formed new connections and created unique partnerships with local seniors-serving organizations. This has allowed BTO to broaden the effectiveness of the programs they provide to African and Black seniors, providing a wider platform to advocate for the unique needs of the older adults they serve.



Developing a Shared Framework for Action



HEALTHY AGING FRAMEWORK | 2022-2023

In 2018, seniors centre leaders envisioned a common framework to help organize their work and articulate its impact so that it could be understood by both rural and urban sectors and systems allies in Alberta. That same year, the Government of Alberta (GoA) funded the Alberta Association of Seniors Centres to develop a framework for seniors centres to be able to articulate their work in relation to the social determinants of health.

Once HAA was established, the framework was then adapted by HAA for use throughout the CBSS sector as a way of establishing a common language

to organize and describe their work in relation to the determinants of healthy aging. The Healthy Aging Framework (HAF) is a tool designed to plan, evaluate, and articulate the impact of multiple programs and services operating through our coordinated models of support and provincial CoPs.

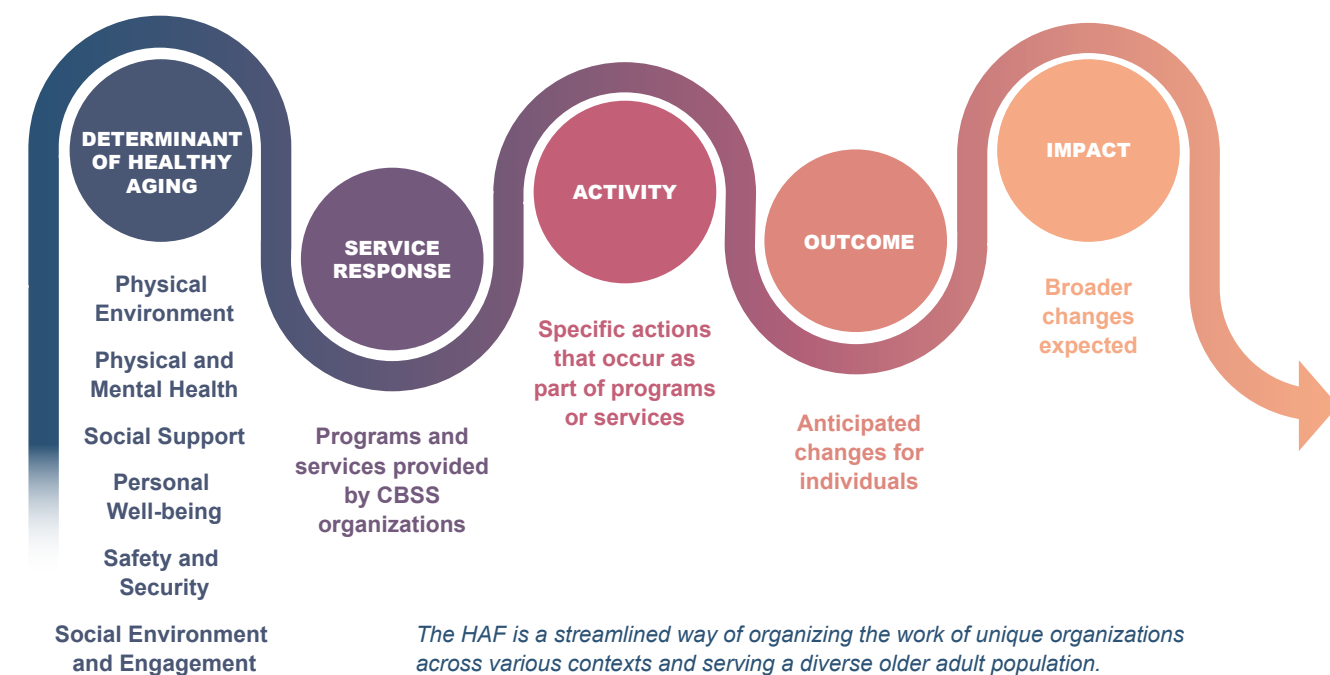
Presenting and piloting the HAF began in April 2022 and has been very successful. Over 150 organizations spanning all five health zones have been exposed to the framework. Outside the six regional gatherings, eight pilots have been conducted with 27 organizations participating,

including CBSS organizations, health care, and local government—each learning how the framework can be applied to their work.

The HAF is gaining momentum and attention from allied sectors. For example, the Alberta Association on Gerontology (AAG), secured funding from AHS to explore the cross-sector application of the HAF to

support collaboration and communication between sectors utilizing the social determinants of health or determinants of healthy aging language.

The HAF is now used as the basis for all common evaluation frameworks of the provincial service delivery models HAA is currently implementing in communities throughout Alberta.



HEALTHY AGING FRAMEWORK IN ACTION

A large seniors centre in Red Deer asked HAA for support to help their board set its strategic direction for the year. Within a few hours, the group had worked through the HAF, identifying and ratifying the determinants of healthy aging they would be aligning with, the service areas they would provide, and the impacts they hoped to achieve. Participants reported that the process was easy and that discussions inspired by elements of the HAF were rich and allowed for different perspectives to be explored.

In Medicine Hat, a small group from a seniors centre used the HAF to explore the outcomes of three expanding programs in three different



service areas. Determining the outcomes for each program created in-depth dialogue that had never occurred before utilizing the HAF to articulate their work. When the group started the morning HAF session, they had three programs written down. Two hours later, all three programs had detailed LOGIC models that can be used to guide evaluation questions and measures for years to come.



Healthy Aging Highlights Age-Friendly Cold Lake Society

Bob, a 65-year-old man living alone in Cold Lake, is blind, has only one arm, and is considered very difficult socially. Due to his challenging and often aggressive personality, home care is unable to provide him with services, and he has no social connection beyond what the Age-Friendly Cold Lake Society (AFCLS) provides through its *Lakeland Regional Supports for Seniors* programs.

As a low-income older adult with visual and mobility impairments, Bob was also having difficulty managing his food and meals. AFCLS provided him with frozen meals to supplement his diet and increase his food security—an imperfect solution but much better than he was managing on his own. Bob’s ability to keep his rented apartment clean was also limited and caused unsafe and unsanitary living conditions. AFCLS was able to connect him with consistent housekeeping support to avoid eviction, improve his quality of life, and enable him to age comfortably and safely at home.

With grant funding for community and home supports stewarded by HAA, AFCLS has also had the resources to transport Bob to Edmonton three times for eye specialist appointments. Through a separate grant, the group also provided him with a volunteer Navigator who has become his friend and offers outstanding companionship and support.



“Without the services of this grant, Bob would be homeless and helpless. We have made it possible for him to safely remain in his home, to access needed medical appointments, and to access nutritious meals.”

-Age-Friendly Cold Lake Society

Resourcing for Sector Capacity-Building



PROVINCIAL AND COMMUNITY COORDINATION



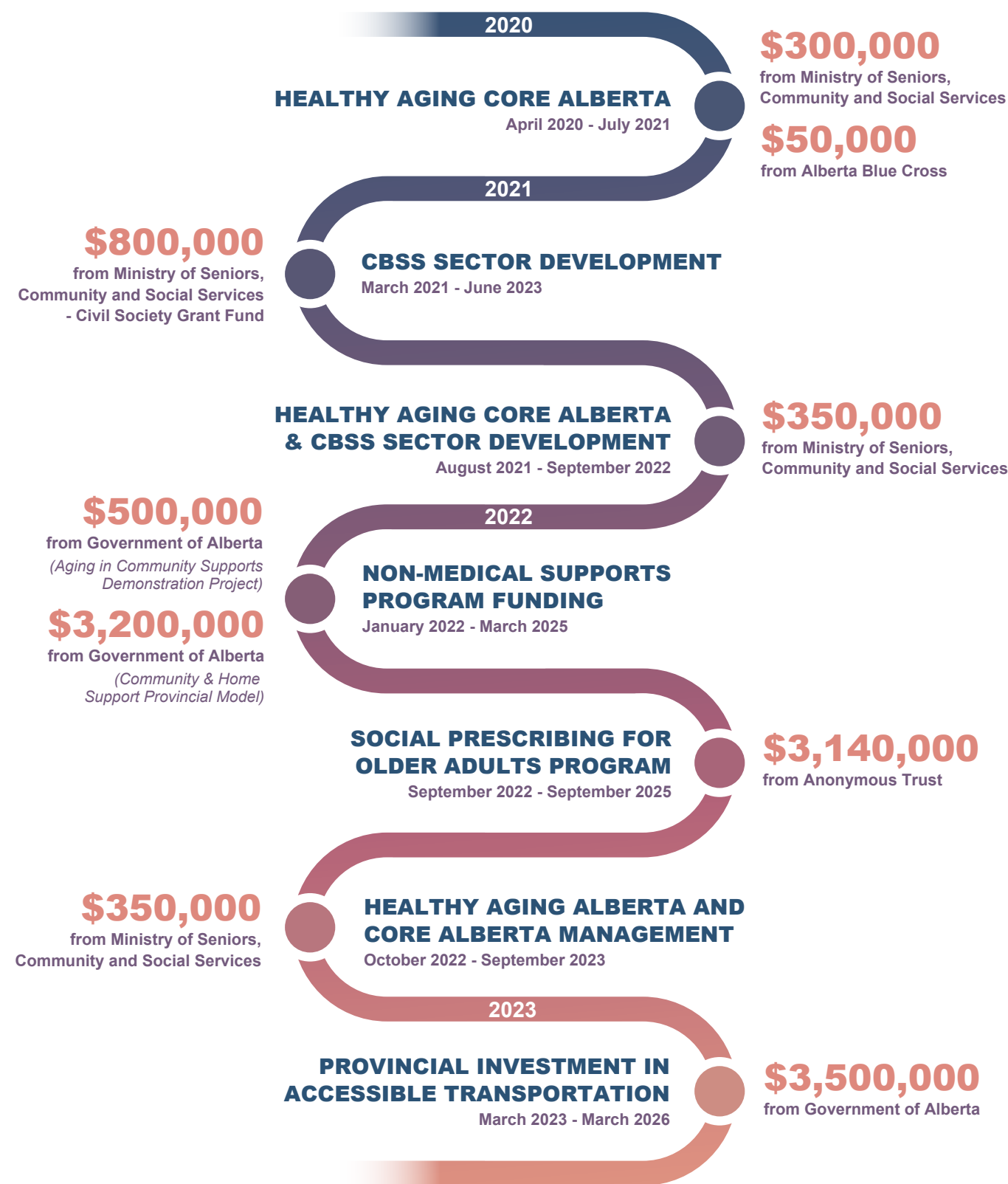
Before HAA's formation, Alberta lacked the provincial infrastructure and systems needed to enable collaboration as a formal CBSS sector. Current priority areas for older adults, including home supports, mental health, and social prescribing, present an opportunity for formal provincial coordination and community partnerships across the province.

Through collaboration with the GoA, HAA has developed a process for selecting and stewarding emerging funding programs. Further coordination includes gathering regional information about service demand and sector readiness and selecting grant recipients able to deliver the highest impact for older adults—ultimately preventing or reducing hospitalizations in the region. HAA is also collaborating with the Ministry of Seniors, Community, and Social Services on evaluation and CoP development and implementation.

HAA FUNDING OVERVIEW

With a strong commitment to accountability, transparency, and effective governance, HAA plays a backbone role as a trusted steward of grant funding for various CBSS organizations across the province. On behalf of the CBSS sector, HAA coordinates and allocates community, local, and provincial funds in alignment with the mission to improve the lives of older adults in Alberta through a coordinated sector of non-medical supports.

While HAA has secured significant funding over the last three years to address the needs of a growing and evolving sector, financial need continues to outpace investment. It is essential to recognize the numerous applications HAA has received for impactful projects and programs that, regrettably, could not receive funding. As a steward of grant funding, HAA remains committed to expanding investment going forward in partnership with the government and other funders. The commitment made by Alberta Health for further long-term investment in non-medical supports for older adults as part of the Continuing Care Transformation Road Map is an exciting and encouraging step in ensuring the CBSS sector is appropriately resourced to fulfill its role in the lives of older Albertans.



Through the generous gifts of individual donors, United Way of Calgary and Area has supported HAA's work including Calgary-focused sector development activities and the upcoming Healthy Aging Alberta Summit.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE APPROACH TO PROVINCIAL SERVICE MODEL DELIVERY DEVELOPMENT



Within three years, HAA has worked to facilitate approximately \$10 million of funding to support enhanced resourcing for community-based non-medical supports by developing provincially coordinated service delivery models.

These models are developed through a Community of Practice (CoP) approach that brings together funding recipients, along with government partners and healthcare providers, to establish aligned practices by sharing successes, challenges and barriers, and promising practices. The CoPs are focused on planning and evaluation, implementation and learning, and mobilizing knowledge for sector capacity-building.

CoP participants work with an evaluator to co-create data collection criteria through an evaluation framework aligned with the HAF and the social determinants of healthy aging. Working from the HAF provided data collection and reporting guidelines for each project as well as the opportunity to communicate outcomes by using a common language. A government representative attend each CoP meeting and participants commented positively on the opportunity to build a more collaborative relationship between CBSS organizations and the government.



NON-MEDICAL SUPPORTS PROGRAM FUNDING | 2022

In April 2022, through collaboration with the GoA and Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services, HAA administered and stewarded a \$500,000 investment in three projects to provide non-medical supports to older adults in Edmonton, Calgary, and Red Deer. Regions were selected for their high demand for non-medical services, high number of older adults, and hospitals that experienced capacity challenges during the pandemic.

Over the course of the one-year project, 424 older adults were served across the three sites. Expanding the project's initial eligibility age to include older adults from 50 to 64 also increased the number of clients served.

Overall, client outcomes improved, most notably self-reported measures of mental and physical health and confidence living at home. Meanwhile, the number of hospital admissions and emergency visits decreased from intake to file closure. The project also identified significant service gaps and inequity for older adults not living in an urban setting. It highlighted the importance of access to direct service providers, reliable transportation, or the financial means to travel to locations where programs and services are being offered.

All 3 project sites reported improved collaboration within their own projects and enhanced referral and communication pathways with the health system and other CBSS organizations

COMMUNITY AND HOME SUPPORTS PROVINCIAL MODEL | 2022-2023



In 2022, the GoA allocated \$3.2 million to HAA to enable CBSS organizations throughout the province to offer older adults various personal, psychosocial, and mental health supports. The funding is being invested over several years, enabling the development and implementation of a phased project that provides coordinated, wrap-around, home-based support programs in different regions across Alberta.

This funding will strengthen the connection and collaboration between CBSS organizations and existing mental health and addiction support services. This project aims to:

- Provide much-needed **respite for caregivers**
- Address **loneliness, isolation, and anxiety**
- **Prevent frailty**
- Facilitate the **connection to elder abuse supports**
- Promote **social connection, participation, and mental wellness for older adults** and their caregivers

The ability to collect and roll up local and regional data on a provincial scale will enable the CBSS sector and allied systems partners (e.g., health and housing) to understand the benefits of holistic care for older adults. Implementing shared evaluation, common language, and mutual support are critical to the long-term success of older adults aging in the community. This project requires funded organizations to actively engage with healthcare partners to develop referral pathways and collaborative approaches to service delivery.



PHASE 1 RECIPIENTS | 2022

After a rigorous collaborative review process, six organizations across Alberta were selected from 53 applicants to receive funding for the first phase of this project. Funding for Phase 1 spans from November 1, 2022, to March 31, 2025, with a total of \$1.05 million provided to applicants in this round.

Phase 1 Funding Recipients:

- Wild Rose Community Connections | SeniorConnexx Project
- Bashaw and District Support Services Association | Senior Rural Support Services
- Camrose & District Home Support Society | Seniors CHOICES
- Age-Friendly Cold Lake Society | Lakeland Regional Supports for Seniors
- Unison at Veiner Centre | Supporting Old Adults to Live Well in their Community
- Westend Seniors Activity Centre | WESeniors Strathcona County Community Hub

PHASE 2 | 2023

In the second phase of this project, recipients of Phase 1 funding act as mentors in the CoP to Phase 2 grant recipients. Successful applicants of Phase 2 will be shared with the CBSS community in late summer 2023.



Applications for Phase 1 Community and Home Supports funding were received from **53 CBSS organizations** across the province

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING PROVINCIAL MODEL | PHASE 1 | 2022

In September 2022, HAA received \$3.14 million from an Anonymous Trust to support the development of a provincial network of social prescribing for older adults programs. This funding supports local social prescribing networks to determine how to functionally incorporate social prescribing pathways into their community in a way that aligns with HAA's common principles. HAA is currently supporting three regional social prescribing pilot projects across the province, expanding to another six communities later in 2023.

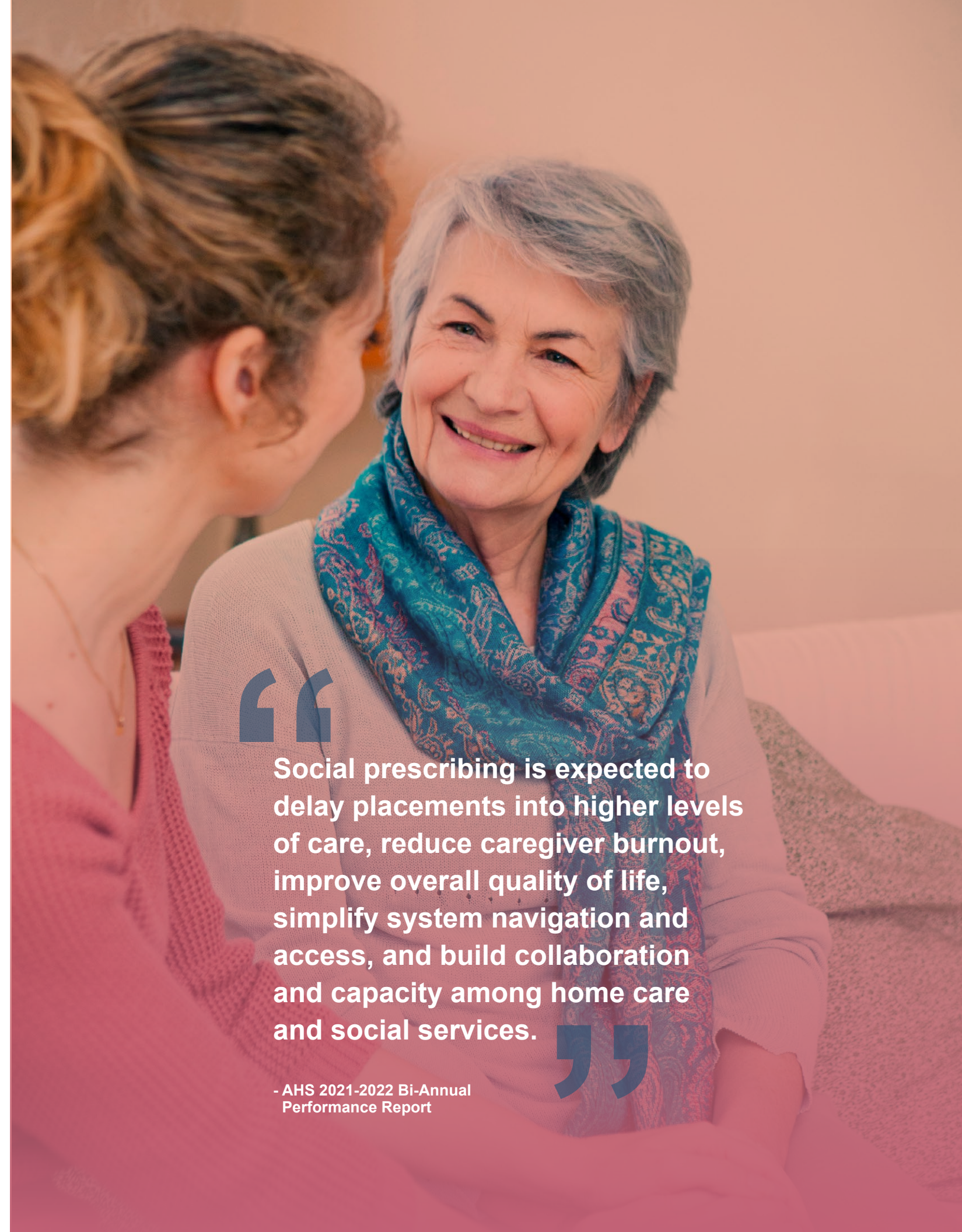
Social prescribing is a holistic approach to healthcare that brings together the social and medical models of health and wellness.

It provides a formal pathway for health providers to address the diverse determinants of health using the familiar and trusted process of “writing

a prescription”. This approach acts as a bridge between clinical and social care while increasing accessibility to community-based programs and services—a support structure that empowers older adults to be active participants in their health and well-being. HAA hopes to expand its Social Prescribing Provincial Model into more communities across Alberta.

The vision for a holistic, integrated care model includes:

- Formal referral pathway to community supports
- Trust-based relational approach
- Care plan tailored to unique needs
- Cross-Sector coordination

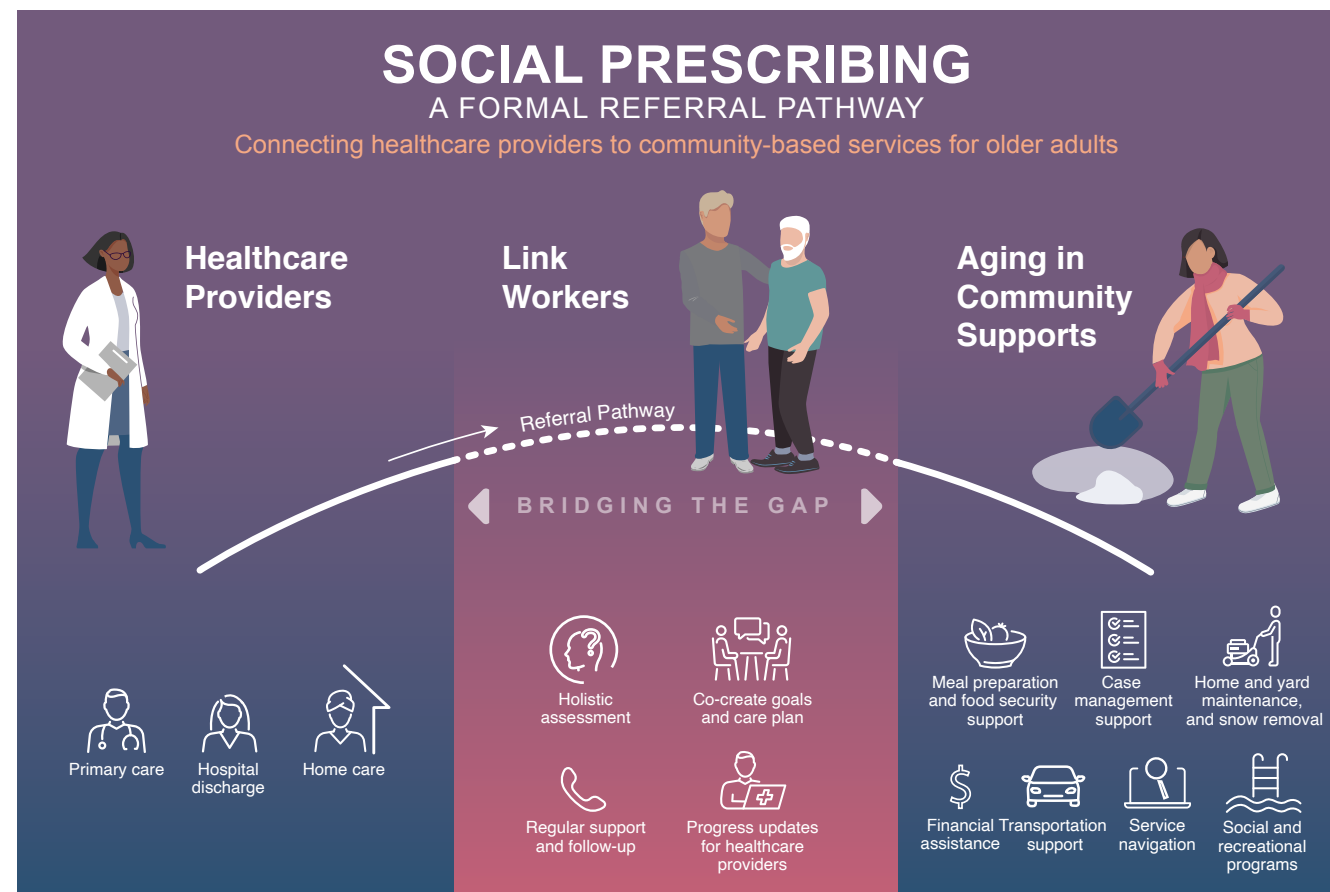


“

Social prescribing is expected to delay placements into higher levels of care, reduce caregiver burnout, improve overall quality of life, simplify system navigation and access, and build collaboration and capacity among home care and social services.

”

- AHS 2021-2022 Bi-Annual Performance Report



PHASE 1 SOCIAL PRESCRIBING PILOT PROJECTS:

Edmonton | Edmonton Seniors 55+ Social Prescribing Program

Partners include: ESCC, Sage Seniors Association, Jewish Family Services Edmonton, Drive Happiness Assisted Transportation, Edmonton Meals on Wheels, and Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative

Lethbridge | Seniors Community Services Partnership – Seniors System Navigation Team

Partners include: Lethbridge Senior Citizens Organization, Lethbridge Family Services, Lethbridge Housing, and Nord Bridge Seniors Centre

Calgary | Aging in Community Supports Program

Partners include: The Way in Network, carya, Jewish Family Service Calgary, Calgary Seniors’ Resource Society, Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens’ Association

To support the development of a provincial social prescribing network for older adults, HAA leverages its backbone role in sector capacity-building to link into provincial initiatives and organizations, national initiatives, and academia. Additionally, HAA will coordinate provincial role standardization, shared data collection and evaluation, and fund development efforts to increase investment in Alberta.

PROVINCIAL INVESTMENT IN ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION | 2023

Through the engagement work of the HAA team of Regional Community Developers (RCDs), assisted transportation for older adults (focused on accessibility, affordability, availability, acceptability, and adaptability) was identified as a shared concern across communities in Alberta, particularly in rural areas. This information was shared with the CLC and the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services, **resulting in \$3.5 million allocated for investment by the GoA through HAA in affordable transportation initiatives in rural communities.** The RCDs are working alongside the identified communities to develop, implement, and evaluate grassroots approaches to service delivery that could potentially be scaled and spread across the province. Rural communities with a significant number of low-income older adults are the priority of the three-year project, which will support up to 20 programs by partnering with volunteer-based drivers and other assisted transportation initiatives.





Healthy Aging Highlights

Jummie's Story



Jummie, a 67-year-old woman, was referred to the Edmonton 55+ Social Prescribing Program by an occupational therapist in the Community Aids to Independent Living (CAIL) program with AHS. She is homebound, has no family or community support, and also needs more affordable housing on her low income. Jummie struggles through her instrumental activities of daily living (IADL) and activities of daily living (ADL). She is living with diabetes, COPD, mobility issues, depression, and other mental health issues.

Intake and assessment were done by the Link Worker at Jewish Family Services Edmonton, who referred Jummie to receive free nutritious meals through Edmonton Meals on Wheels. The Link Worker also noticed that Jummie needed help with cleaning her apartment. They were able to connect her with their home support workers for a subsidized rate of \$5 per hour.

To potentially assist with her ADLs, the Case Manager helped refer Jummie for an AHS Home Care Services assessment. Applications were also submitted to GEF Housing for subsidized housing and Cvida for their rental assistance program. After contacting the Special Needs Assessment program, the Case Manager learned that Jummie would be eligible to receive a more comfortable and supportive mattress as well as reimbursement for her diabetic supplies.

Jummie was open to joining a social community but was limited because of her mobility issues. The Case Manager referred her to the Seniors Centre Without Walls (SCWW) program through the Edmonton Southside Primary Care Network. Following a referral from Jummie's doctor, the Case Manager also reached out to a community geriatric psychiatrist program on her behalf.

While Jummie's case is still a work in progress, she is grateful for the assistance and support. She said it has been a long time since she breathed clean air in her apartment and that talking to other older adults in the SCWW program has made her feel that she is not alone.

Our Future Vision for Healthy Aging in Alberta



LEARNING FROM OPPORTUNITIES, THRIVING THROUGH CHALLENGES

Over the last three years, HAA has focused on proactive relationship building, developing the sector, and informing systems change, in addition to the many positive accomplishments resulting from the engagement of CBSS organizations and allies in this work. Yet despite their enthusiasm and interest in participating further, many organizations are focused on day-to-day survival due to a combination of increased client complexity and demand for services, decreased resources in the post-pandemic recovery phase, and decreased volunteer capacity.

Trying to focus on meeting older adults' needs while facing these challenges does not leave organizations with many resources to engage in activities such as capacity enhancement, public policy, or service integration. To encourage organizations to thrive through these challenges and guide the sector's collective vision for the future of healthy aging in Alberta, the CLC will ensure that HAA's community development approach supports organizations within their current realities while maintaining progress and momentum on sector development and systems integration going forward.



THE FOLLOWING REPRESENT SIGNIFICANT LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF HEALTHY AGING ALBERTA:



1 HAA's growth has been rapid and contributed to significant progress across the strategic priorities. **While rapid and agile advancement is exciting, this growth comes with essential considerations for moving forward sustainably.**



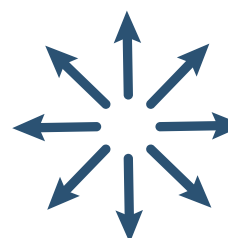
2 **HAA must continue efforts to keep the initiative grassroots and community driven.** There are perceptions that HAA is a government initiative or driven by government funding, especially in light of GoA's increased role as a funder. HAA is working to manage the tension of being both a community developer and a funding facilitator by connecting organizations to other resources and partners that can support their work, as well as employing a community development approach to the administration of funding.



3 Efforts to **increase clarity and communication about HAA** must continue as the initiative evolves. This includes intentional engagement and effective communication with rural and remote communities and equity-deserving groups.



4 While the regional constellations are growing and the provincial network continues to develop, **CBSS organizations in rural and remote areas have unique needs and circumstances**, such as large geographic service areas, significant service gaps, and high and increasing demand as more older adults seek to age in the right way for them. The voices of these communities must continue to be elevated, and increased capacity is required to support these organizations.



5 A strong foundation for sector development has been built by engaging with CBSS organizations across Alberta. **Going forward, HAA must broaden engagement to ensure the initiative includes all groups and individuals representing the diversity of Alberta's older adults.** Prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion across all aspects of HAA's work is critical and will continue to be a primary focus of the coming years.

CBSS SECTOR DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



Based on the work of HAA to date, the CLC identified the need for a robust evidence-based touchstone document that identifies potential solutions and pathways to the systems change and integration needed to ensure the CBSS sector can play a leadership role in the continuum of support for older adults. With support from the GoA, the first phase of this position paper was completed resulting in a CBSS Sector Development Framework. This framework describes the requirements to develop a fulsome roadmap for long-term sector evolution by providing a set of questions to guide future reflections on system coordination and integration.

Options, recommendations, and solutions will be derived through dialogues and deliberation with CBSS organizations, allied systems of support and care, partners, and policymakers in

subsequent phases of developing a policy paper. This research document acts as a resource for collective action. It builds a case for the importance of CBSS organizations and why investing in sector development is needed to support the well-being of older adults in Alberta's communities.

The diagram above illustrates key areas for consideration in developing a CBSS sector. Building an integrated system of support is a complex undertaking that involves technical, financial, and value-based considerations. It requires HAA to articulate the vision of the overall system and identify potential linkages between various system components. Perhaps most importantly, it requires collective engagement in open dialogues to identify our shared aspirations.



HEALTHY AGING ALBERTA SUMMIT 2023 | OCTOBER 10-12 | CALGARY

HAA and the Alberta Association on Gerontology (AAG) are hosting an inaugural, groundbreaking event to connect individuals and organizations across sectors with the shared purpose of making Alberta one of the best places in the world to grow older. The Summit will underscore the need for coordination and integration of community-based services for older adults.

Over three days, the Summit will offer presentations, plenary sessions, and workshops to foster collaborative learning, future planning, and discussion around relevant cross-sector opportunities and challenges. Through impactful conversations, the Summit aims to consider options

for innovative service delivery, policy development and implementation, and systems transformation to better support older Albertans.

Following the October 2023 event, HAA aims to continue the Summit on a bi-annual basis to further sector engagement, capacity building, and increased networking opportunities.



**Healthy Aging
Alberta Summit 2023**



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STRATEGIES

As the initiative continues to evolve, HAA is actively building a strategy for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) that will be implemented by both the initiative and the broader network. HAA is engaging advisory groups of diverse voices to guide and execute the strategy and policy, looking at sector community engagement of marginalized older adults,

communications of DEI materials, resource sharing to implement DEI strategies in CBSS organizations, and network capacity-building for inclusive policies. By realizing this strategy, HAA aims to strengthen network capacity as a whole, providing a better province for equity-deserving older adults to age well and be supported by their communities.



EMPOWERING OLDER ADULTS TO AGE HOW THEY CHOOSE

HAA's future vision is to continue creating a coordinated and respected CBSS sector within Alberta's broader system of support. By developing a network of community-based organizations, government and health system partners, and allied systems, **we aim to empower every older adult to age according to their preferences and improve their overall health and social outcomes.**

Our commitment includes promoting accessible communication, addressing ageism, promoting diversity and inclusion, and ensuring the voices of older adults are heard at all levels.

Through collaboration with various stakeholders, we will create the infrastructure needed for older adults to be fully engaged members of their communities, ultimately making Alberta one of the best places in the world to grow older. Join us as we envision a stronger, better, and brighter future for older adults in Alberta.



Resources

Healthy Aging Alberta

<https://calgaryunitedway.org/healthy-aging-alberta/>

Healthy Aging Core Alberta

<https://corealberta.ca/>

Reports and Publications

What We Heard Report

Community Activation Sessions 2021 Report

Continuing to Serve Seniors During the Pandemic, Fall 2021 Report

Available to download at:

<https://calgaryunitedway.org/healthy-aging-alberta/>

Thank you to our funding partners:



**Anonymous
Foundation**



A network of
community allies
for older adults.