



Immigrant Senior Sector Connections: Supporting Ethnocultural Seniors in Alberta

OCTOBER 19, 2023
12:00 - 1:30PM

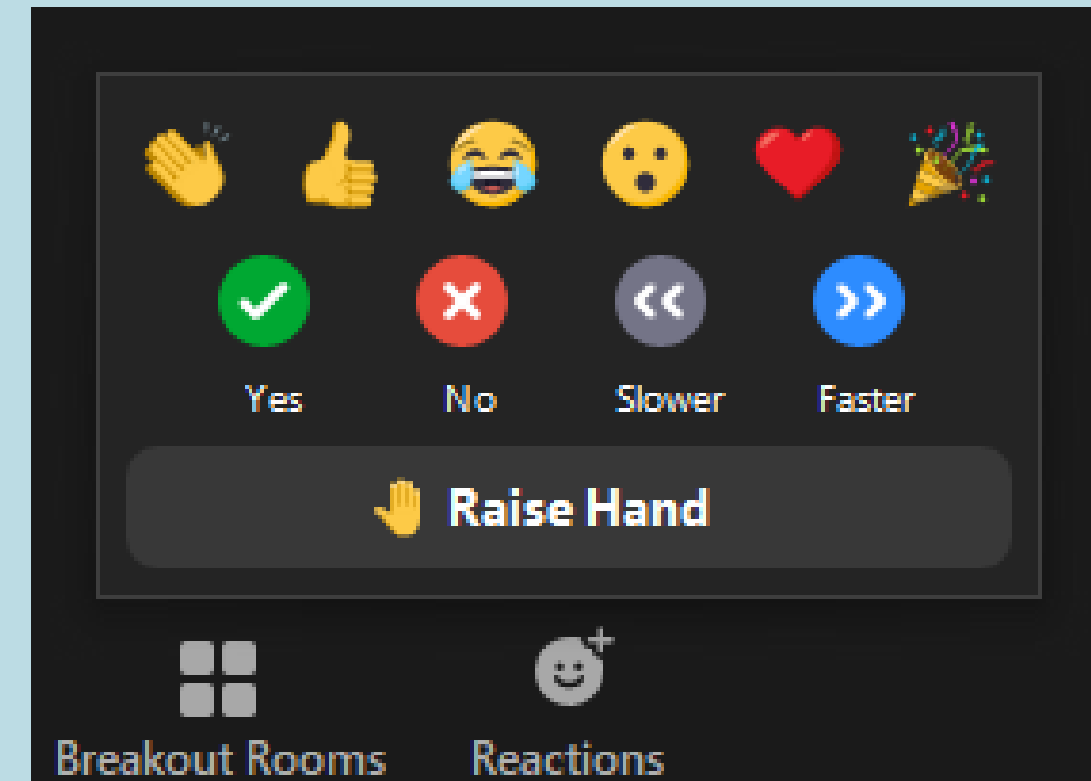
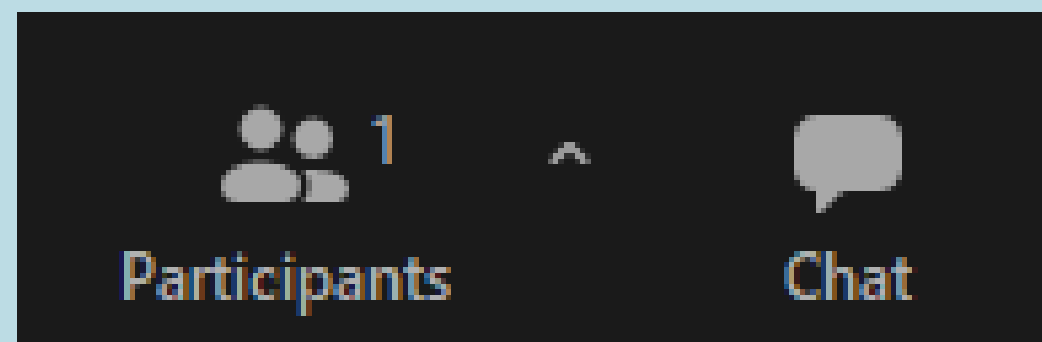
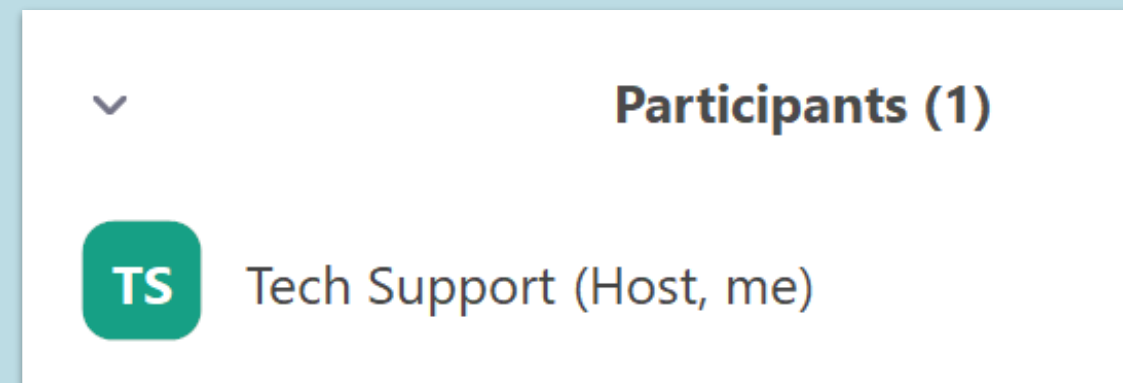
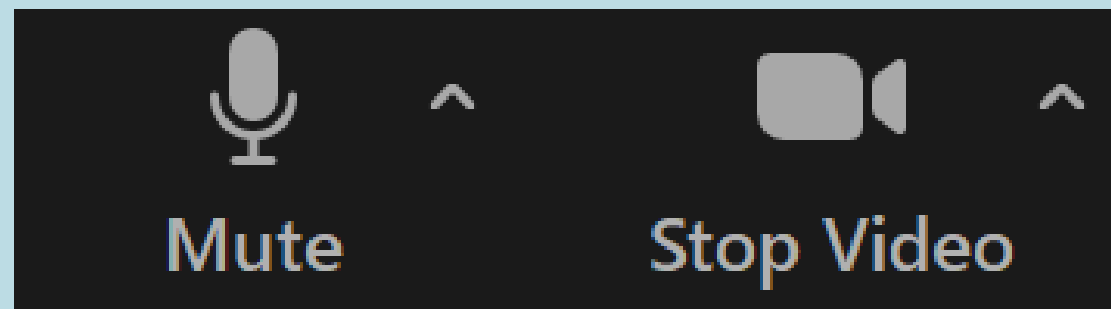
Hosted by:



In the spirit of our journey to promote reconciliation, we would like to honour the truth of the shared history and acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations.

We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us.

Housekeeping



This session will be recorded, and the slides will also be available.

They will be uploaded on the CORE Alberta platform <https://corealberta.ca/>

What to expect today:

- Supporting ethnocultural seniors in Alberta: Barriers and Opportunities
- Introduction of the panelists
 - Azita Afsharnejat, Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
 - Rebeca Andrada, Immigrant Services Calgary
 - Yvonne Chiu, Multicultural Health Brokers
 - Muna Ali, Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo
- Panelist Discussion
- Audience Q&A
- Wrap-Up and Survey

Panelist Questions:

1. What issues, barriers and challenges are raised for immigrant seniors coming to Alberta?
2. What resources and services are immigrant seniors accessing and what challenges exist in using these services?
3. What resources and actions can we address together to provide solutions for seniors?

Types of Immigrant Seniors

Canadian Permanent Resident status

- Immigrated earlier in life and aged in Canada i.e. naturalized citizen.
- Parent/Grandparent sponsorship (20y.) or Spousal sponsorship (3 y.)

Refugee seniors (obtained Canadian Permanent Resident status):

- Sponsored by government
- “Privately sponsored” by family members, a group of 5 community members, etc.

Refugee Claimant seniors

- “asylum seeker”
- Waiting for their refugee status application to be processed.

Newcomer seniors

- Super Visa. This is visitor visa that is renewable up to maximum of 10 years, but must re-apply for extension every five year.
- Seniors who arrive in Canada to visit their family on a short term (6 months or less).
- Temporary Foreign Workers – Most Ukrainians arrive in this category.

Our seniors' enduring issues

- ❑ Poverty – resulting from systemic and registration factors
 - ❑ Housing insecurity
- ❑ Language barriers and cultural distance from mainstream services...
- ❑ Loneliness and isolation
- ❑ Systemic lack of responsiveness to these seniors needs and strength – particularly the health, mental health and income support sectors.

The impact of Language Barriers on immigrant seniors' lives

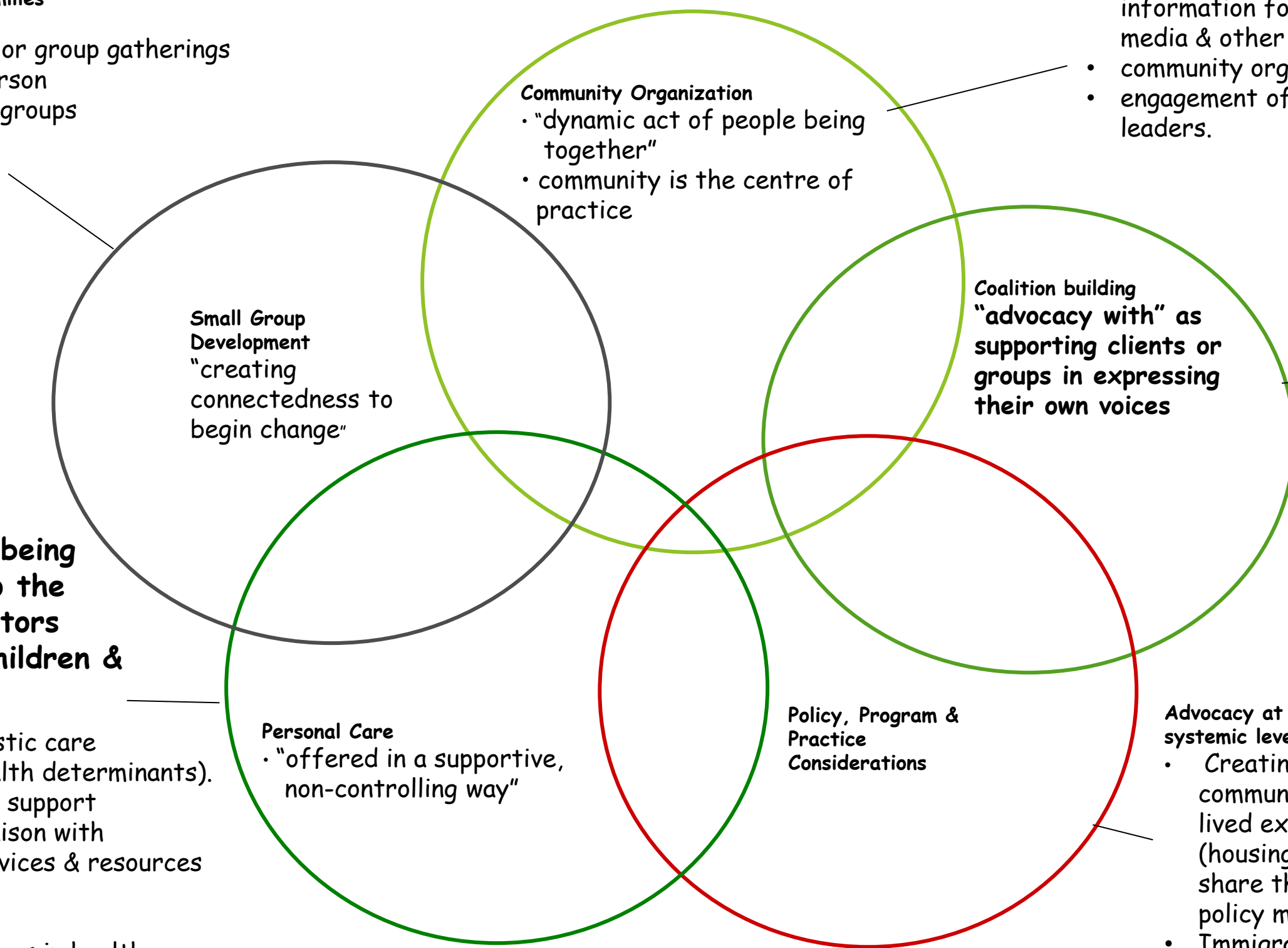


Difficulties navigating health care and social systems
Reduced access to social and health services
Reduced health, safety, social connections
Intergenerational gap with acculturated grandchildren
Acculturation stress, interpersonal role conflicts and familial conflicts
Social and emotional isolation
Loss of integrity, diminished self-esteem, increased vulnerability
Decreased mobility
Loss of independence and autonomy
Lack of pension benefits (old age pension and guaranteed income supplement)

Dimension of the Multicultural Health Brokering Practice

Connecting parents & families with each other

- Ethnocultural senior group gatherings virtually and in person
- family recreation groups



Small Group Development
"creating connectedness to begin change"

Community Organization
• "dynamic act of people being together"
• community is the centre of practice

Coalition building
"advocacy with" as supporting clients or groups in expressing their own voices

Personal Care
• "offered in a supportive, non-controlling way"

Policy, Program & Practice Considerations

Listening & being attentive to the multiple factors affecting children & families.

- one-to-one holistic care (addressing health determinants).
- family-oriented support
- connecting & liaison with mainstream services & resources

Community mobilization

- development & dissemination of salient information for families through ethnic media & other natural channels.
- community organizing training
- engagement of community & religious leaders.

Advocacy at the Providers & Institutional level

- collaborative care with mainstream service providers.
- Training in intercultural competent care.
- Cross-sectoral alliances to address social inclusion (COSI).

Advocacy at the systemic level

- Creating opportunities for community members with lived experience with poverty (housing & food insecurity) to share their stories with policy makers & advocates
- Immigrant Refugee seniors' advocacy "Age of Wisdom" Initiative.

* Labonte, R Issues in health Promotion series #3. Health promotion and empowerment: Practice frameworks. Toronto: Centre for Health Promotion, University of Toronto & ParticipACTION, 1993.

Resources and Actions for us to address together:

1. Reveal the **unique pre and post migration realities** (challenges, strengths and hopes) of our seniors for relevant resource, program and policy planning.
2. Have **adequate funding for culturally and linguistically-matched Outreach Workers** to support our seniors equitably navigate and access existing services.
3. Make visible and address the **systemic gaps and barriers** our seniors are encountering.
4. Support ethnocultural communities to **create culturally and linguistically relevant mutual support groups** for the seniors to overcome their deep isolation.
5. Involve our seniors and insightful ethnocultural community leaders & workers **proactively in developing a spectrum of support for aging well** (culturally and linguistically relevant continuum of care.)



Thank you for participating!

- ☑ Immigrant Senior Sector Connections – CORE Group is live!
- ☑ Join the Group! Contact Azita, azitaa@ciwa-online.com and Rebeca, rebecaa@immigrantservicescalgary.ca
- ☑ Please complete the survey and let us know how you would like to engage going forward



A network of
community allies
for older adults.

