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THE momentum OF many

Fueling a Movement for Aging Well

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Who we are

Healthy Aging Alberta (HAA) is a 'by community, for community' initiative working to make Alberta one of the best places to grow older. We connect, strengthen, and amplify a network of community-based seniors serving (CBSS) organizations and groups, as well as community allies, to support older adults to age on their terms.

Our mission

HAA builds upon and advances the work of the CBSS sector through collective action, system change, and integration with allied sectors to benefit older adults.

Our vision

Every older adult is empowered to age how they choose, ultimately improving their well-being and the well-being of their communities.

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Mariam Elghahuagi
Director, Healthy Aging Alberta



Looking Back: Five Years of Collective Momentum

This year marked five years since the CBSS sector and its allies launched Healthy Aging Alberta—and what a journey it's been. What began as a shared vision has grown into a dynamic provincial initiative that brings people together to shape systems, strengthen local efforts, and amplify what works.

Over the past year, we've deepened regional and provincial relationships, advanced the sector's service delivery model, launched the second version of the Systems Map, and expanded access to social prescribing. These milestones reflect what's possible when community leads and partners collaborate across sectors.

This movement is the result of collective effort—community-based organizations, older adults, volunteers, public servants, funders, and systems partners working together with a shared vision. Our dedicated staff play a key role in holding space for that collaboration, supporting relationships, and creating the conditions for others to lead.

I'm proud of what we've built—and even more grateful for how we've built it: through trust, relationships, and shared purpose. Building on decades of work by community-based organizations, the CBSS sector is now more coordinated than ever and is on its way to being intentionally integrated into Alberta's healthy aging and care landscape as part of the province's broader health transformation.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this work. Together, we are creating lasting change—and we're just getting started.



connect & collaborate

We connect and coordinate the CBSS sector to collaborate with community allies, government, and other sectors—empowering older adults' autonomy and well-being.

Fueling Change, One Community at a Time

We believe sustainable systems change starts in community. Our approach centers on listening deeply, building trust, and amplifying local innovation. Through grassroots relationships, Regional Gatherings, and provincial partnerships, our team connects, supports, and learns alongside CBSS organizations across Alberta. Together, we're weaving a stronger provincial network—one grounded in place, shaped by people, and driven by the shared vision of aging well in every corner of the province.

Exploring the 'Power of Community': 2025 Regional Gatherings

In the spring of 2025, we hosted our fourth annual Regional Gatherings across Alberta. **These six events brought together 250 participants from 136 unique organizations**—including CBSS organizations, healthcare, housing, and allied sectors—for engaging, regionally tailored sessions focused on collaboration, innovation, and equity in aging well and the CBSS sector.

Each gathering followed a consistent format, featuring updates from HAA, consultation on the Provincial Service Delivery Model, sessions on amplifying diverse voices, a Power of Community workshop, Alberta 211 presentations, and interactive conversation cafés. Keynote speakers and sector leaders helped spark critical discussions aligned with regional needs and opportunities.

Two dominant themes emerged across regions:

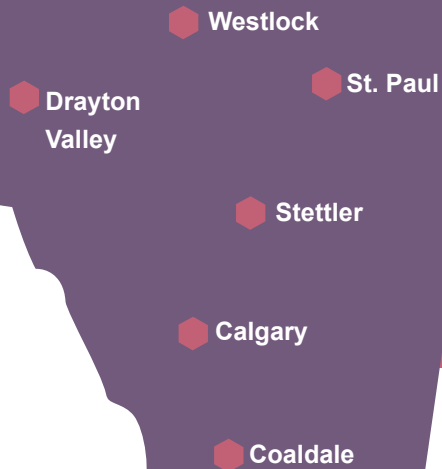
- **Lack of Awareness of Services:** Many older adults remain unaware of available supports unless informed by peers or personal networks. Newcomers and those with limited English face even greater barriers. Participants emphasized the need for proactive, person-centred outreach.
- **Transportation Barriers:** When older adults stop driving, limited transit options, affordability, and difficulty arranging rides hinder their independence and connection to services and social supports.

The gatherings concluded with a guided asset-mapping and visioning exercise where participants:

- **Envisioned an ideal future** where these challenges are fully addressed.
- **Identified local programs, people, and networks** already working toward that vision.
- **Highlighted one or two key “sparks”** that could be scaled, strengthened, or connected.

These gatherings continue to serve as a powerful mechanism for advancing community-driven solutions. By grounding conversations in regional realities and shared values, they not only deepened relationships across regions but also surfaced shared priorities that will guide our collective efforts to support aging well in every corner of the province.

In-person sessions were held in:



Rate of attendance

(number of people who attended vs. those who registered):

Average attendance rate:
87% in 2025

↑ Compared to 2024,
this is a 16% increase

A final gathering was scheduled in Peace River but was unfortunately canceled due to forest fire evacuations in the area.



“It was lovely to meet many of the community organizations and make connections I might not typically interact with.”

- 2025 Regional Gathering attendee

“I really appreciated the networking opportunities as well as learning about other programs in our rural areas.”

- 2025 Regional Gathering attendee

“The Power of Community conversation was a great exercise, and the Service Delivery Model consultation was very informative and insightful.”

- 2025 Regional Gathering attendee



The Community Development Team's Year in Review

Our Regional Community Developers (RCDs) are embedded across the province, helping to build capacity, foster collaboration, and link grassroots efforts with broader provincial initiatives. Grounded in trust-based relationships and asset-based community development, their work supports a more coordinated, responsive, and sustainable CBSS sector.

Over the past year, our team has continued to grow our network and focused on building authentic relationships with CBSS organizations and community allies. We heard consistent priorities across Alberta: the need for expanded transportation options, affordable and pet-friendly housing, sustainable funding, and accessible resources for elder abuse, dementia, and food insecurity. Communities also expressed increasing interest in equity, diversity, and inclusion, alongside concerns about rising living costs, social isolation, and the desire for more intergenerational opportunities.



21,905 km

The distance that the Community Development team collectively travelled across Alberta to connect with communities.



Advancing Equity in Aging: What We Heard

In 2024, we partnered with an equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) consultant to engage over 200 CBSS organizations and 100 older adults through eight focus groups and the 2024 Regional Gatherings. Recognizing that aging experiences vary widely based on identity, geography, and access, this work explored how EDI can be embedded meaningfully into the systems that support aging well in Alberta.

Participants identified the key ingredients for healthy aging, as well as its systemic barriers—transportation challenges, lack of representation, unwelcoming spaces, and low awareness of available supports. The resulting *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Report* offers a sector-wide call to action to help build more inclusive, responsive, and sustainable systems for all older adults. This report is just the beginning of our EDI journey as we continue collaborating and listening to community needs and priorities.

[Read the report.](#)

Navigating the Network: Systems Map 2.0

In October 2024, we launched the second version of [Alberta's CBSS Systems Map](#), incorporating feedback from the 2022 and 2023 Regional Gatherings. This visual tool helps simplify complex networks by showing how organizations and services connect across the province.

Users can search by organization name, service area, or region, and explore various connections such as community collaborations, financial partnerships, and referral pathways. The map helps depict both existing relationships and gaps, supporting organizations in strengthening or developing new partnerships.

With 3,182 users and 281 organizations and services represented since launch, the Systems Map continues to support greater sector coordination and collaboration. Offering a clearer picture of how services connect across Alberta enables more effective, community-driven support for older adults.

[Put your organization on the map!](#)



Connecting Across the North: Community, Collaboration, and Innovation

In November 2024, Healthy Aging Alberta's Community Development team travelled more than 1,500 km across Northern Alberta—visiting Edson, Valleyview, Driftpile Cree Nation, Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement, and beyond.

At each stop, the team listened to community leaders share their strengths, hopes, and concerns. From innovative local efforts—like Paddle Prairie's wood delivery program for Elders and Valleyview's Purple Light Nights campaign—to challenges around transportation, staffing, and extreme weather, the resilience of Northern communities shone through.

The team also presented to the Northern Alberta Elected Leaders group, sharing examples of CBSS-led innovation and emphasizing the vital role of municipal leadership in supporting aging in place.

“HAA's insights into promoting well-being and healthy lifestyles for all ages sparked meaningful discussions among our leaders,” shared Myrna Lanctot, CLC Member and Mayor of the Village of Donnelly. **“This collaboration reflects our commitment to working together for the betterment of our communities.”**

Through these visits, the message was clear: community-led solutions are paving the way for transformative change even in remote areas with limited capacity. The journey reinforced the importance of trust and relationship building, sharing knowledge, and elevating Northern voices as part of a stronger, more connected provincial movement for healthy aging.



Provincial Collaboration: Aligning Efforts for Greater Impact

Collaboration is the foundation of everything we do at Healthy Aging Alberta. We know that systems change does not happen in isolation—it is built through trust, relationships, and alignment with others working toward shared goals. That is why we intentionally work alongside provincial partners to ensure our strategies, tools, and actions are coordinated, complementary, and informed by what matters most to older adults.

We continue to align our work with the strategic directions of provincial partners such as the Alberta Association on Gerontology (AAG), Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Council (AEAAC), Alberta Seniors & Community Housing Association (ASCHA), Family & Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA), Caregivers Alberta, and the Connecting People and Community for Living Well (CPCLW) initiative. These connections help amplify collective impact while avoiding duplication and ensuring community insights are reflected at the system level.

Together, we are building a more cohesive ecosystem where policy, practice, and lived experience come together to fuel a movement for aging well in Alberta.

Co-Hosting the 2025 Summit

In the spirit of collaboration, we are **co-hosting the 2025 Healthy Aging Alberta Summit with AAG and AEAAC**. Together, we are creating space for sector-wide learning and inspiration to drive system transformation.

Building Community Capacity, Together

Through **close partnership with CPCLW**, our Regional Community Developers co-create solutions that reflect both provincial strategy and local realities. This includes shared use of the Healthy Aging Framework and Wellbeing Guide, co-presenting at events, and actively connecting communities across sectors.

Collaborating for Cohesive Care: AAG Ecosystem Project

Led by AAG and in partnership with CPCLW, HAA is supporting a **new project exploring how communities can strengthen well-being through collaborative action and local decision-making**.

Using a case study approach, the AAG Ecosystem Project is currently examining eight rural and one urban community to identify promising practices that connect non-medical and medical supports. By building on existing resources, data, and community voices, the goal is to highlight how collaborative, community-led action can create more cohesive, accessible, and naturally supportive communities.

This work aligns with the Healthy Aging Framework and complements Alberta Health's priorities such as the Alberta Rural Health Action Plan, Modernizing Alberta's Primary Health Care System (MAPS), and continuing care transformation.

Healthy Aging CORE Alberta: Connecting & Coordinating the CBSS Sector Online

Healthy Aging CORE Alberta (CORE Alberta) connects the CBSS sector and allied partners to professional development opportunities such as events, training, resources, and funding opportunities. The platform also hosts digital communities of practice or CORE Groups where sector leaders collaborate on critical issues and promising, innovative practices related to healthy aging.



“A great resource to support local groups wanting to become more informed on broader issues and initiatives - lifts the ceiling for local leaders.”

- CORE event attendee

“Through CORE Alberta and related HAA initiatives, we’ve gained access to valuable learning opportunities, sector insights, and a supportive network of professionals working across disciplines.”

- CORE user

CORE Groups and Events

From 2024 to 2025, CORE Alberta supported 19 virtual groups with 1,667 members—a 22% increase from the previous year. Led by 44 sector leaders from across Alberta and Canada, these groups hosted 45 events with 1,641 attendees and over 1,800 on-demand views. Key topics included elder abuse, dementia, caregiving, mental health, social prescribing, intergenerational connections, and supports for ethnocultural older adults.

This year saw increased collaboration across groups, including a national community of practice on intergenerational connections and a revitalized Social Connection, Wellness, and Mental Health group. These crossover events helped align efforts and strengthen sector relationships, improving supports for older adults across the province.

HAA-Led Events

The HAA team organized 10 additional online CORE events, bringing together 199 attendees from across Canada. These sessions covered important topics, including CORE training, navigating Alberta utilities, medicine management, the Healthy Aging Asset Index, and the HAA Systems Map.

We worked closely with teams from CORE BC and Canada to support the engagement of sector representatives nationwide to build strong virtual connections and encourage national resource sharing. Each event helped connect participants with valuable insights and tools to better support older adults in their communities.

Partnering with Men's Sheds: Building Thriving Communities

The partnership between Men's Sheds and HAA continues to provide meaningful opportunities for men across the province to connect, share skills, and cultivate a sense of belonging. Men's Sheds, a grassroots initiative led by men, operates with a simple yet powerful approach: somewhere to go, something to do, someone to talk to.

Over the past year, we supported the Alberta Men's Sheds Association through the CORE Alberta platform, newsletters, and regional engagement opportunities—helping expand awareness and reach across the province.

The Men's Sheds CORE Group continues to foster collaboration, share best practices, and amplify the value of Sheds in reducing isolation and supporting men's well-being. This partnership powerfully demonstrates how community-led initiatives can play a vital role in supporting healthy aging and improving quality of life.

“We are achieving [our] goals, in large part, due to the support from the HAA team and resources provided through CORE Alberta. Their excellence in creating community connections and linking us with others doing this important work has been a game changer for us.”

- Punch Jackson,
Co-chair of the Alberta Men's Sheds Association





strengthen

We strengthen the CBSS sector to enhance organizational resilience and supports for older adults.



Scaling What Works: Provincial Service Delivery Models

Our three Provincial Service Delivery Models build on the strengths, relationships, and innovations already thriving in communities. By providing targeted funding and sharing proven practices, these models help local organizations expand their reach and deliver high-quality supports for older adults. Home and Community Supports, Social Prescribing, and Assisted Transportation models enhance well-being by increasing access to vital non-medical services.

The Power Behind the Model: Communities of Practice

What makes our Provincial Service Delivery Models unique is the built-in Community of Practice (CoP). Beyond funding, this approach connects organizations in a collaborative learning environment where trust, innovation, and shared purpose thrive. CoPs create space for funded partners to co-develop evaluation methods, exchange lessons learned, and build real-time connections that strengthen service delivery.

Organizations report feeling more supported and less siloed—often building relationships beyond the meetings themselves. As one partner shared, participation helped them articulate the impact of CBSS organizations and successfully make the case for support to their local municipality. These CoPs are more than a meeting—they reinforce that we are in this together and are working as a collective to improve the well-being of older adults across our province.

Home and Community Supports: Enhancing Everyday Well-being

The Home and Community Supports model is a coordinated, wraparound approach to delivering non-medical community services essential to older adults' health, resilience, and quality of life. These supports ease loneliness, boost mental well-being, prevent or delay frailty, offer caregiver respite, and nurture strong community ties.

With continued support from the Government of Alberta, 27 organizations across 100 communities are delivering these vital services until 2027. Together, they are helping older adults remain connected, supported, and empowered to age well in their own communities.





2024-2025 Significant Milestones

11,000+ older adults
accessed **35,000+** home
and community services*

100 communities supported
across Alberta*

7 new funded partners joined:

Anzac Family Community Support Society

Fox Creek Community Resource Centre

Oyen FCSS

Rocky Mountain House and District West
Country Family Service Association

Whitecourt FCSS

Bonnyville FCSS

Flagstaff's Informed Response Sharing Team

*Since November 2022

Evaluation Working Group

To strengthen data collection for the Home and Community Supports model, HAA launched an Evaluation Working Group in early 2025. Six CoP and project site representatives co-designed tools that better reflect the diversity of programs across Alberta. Outcomes included two new evaluation approaches for short-term services and improved alignment with frontline realities—reducing reporting burden while maintaining meaningful data. The process fostered evaluation literacy, ownership, and tools grounded in community practice.

“It’s allowed older adults to live in their homes longer, independently. We have a housing shortage in general, not to mention a lack of seniors’ facilities. This service has really helped them just stay in their home [and] be healthier.”

- Provider, Home and Community Supports



Assisted Transportation: Driving Access, Fueling Independence

Many older adults in rural communities want to age in place but face growing barriers to accessing and affording transportation. Assisted transportation programs help address this gap by improving access to medical, social, and basic services—leading to better health and well-being. As a key social determinant of health, transportation directly influences nearly every aspect of independent living.

With support from the Government of Alberta, 12 new organizations joined the project in August 2024—expanding its reach across the province. Nineteen organizations are now delivering vital transportation services to older adults across 65 communities. New and long-standing transportation programs across the province continue to expand, driven by trust-building, strong community visibility, and innovative partnerships.

Ridership is steadily increasing, and for older adults, this translates into greater autonomy, reduced isolation, and improved access to critical services. These programs are doing more than moving people—they are strengthening community connections and making it possible for more Albertans to age in place with dignity and support.



“It is such a domino effect, and you then become that trusted service that nobody can duplicate. It’s huge because it doesn’t only affect the people that you serve. It supports their families.”

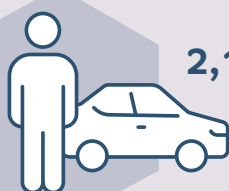
- Provider, Assisted Transportation

Assisted Transportation Highlights

From November 2023 to February 2025:



**19 projects and
65 communities
supported**



2,115 riders



10,922 rides provided

71% social and basic needs rides

26% medical purposes rides

12 new funded partners joined in 2024:



1. Claresholm & District Transportation Society
2. Driftpile Cree Nation
3. Foothills County
4. Greenview FCSS
5. Lynks Harvest Sky Services and Supports Society
6. Legal Lions Community Transportation
7. Milk River Heritage Handivan Association
8. Northern Sunrise County
9. Provost Lions Handivan
10. Siksika Health Services
11. M.D. of Spirit River
12. Three Hills Seniors Outreach

One Connection Leads to Many: Sundre's Journey

In Sundre, their assisted transportation project ignited an opportunity for broader community collaboration. After receiving funding for local assisted transportation, Sundre's Senior SPRUCE Society connected with HAA to explore social prescribing. Using the Social Prescribing Toolkit, the Community Development team supported the Sundre community through three facilitated engagement sessions—including asset mapping and public presentations—through which Sundre identified strong local readiness to adopt social prescribing in their community.

“Reaching out to HAA was a pivotal moment... we've gained a fresh and exciting perspective on how to foster healthy aging in Sundre and the surrounding areas. From the start, HAA has been an unwavering source of support, helping us navigate each stage of our journey. We're thrilled about what lies ahead and look forward to continuing our partnership with HAA as we move forward on this transformative path for our seniors.”

- Jane Atkins, Chair, Sundre's Senior SPRUCE Society

Social Prescribing: Where Health Meets Community

Social prescribing connects older adults with the social, emotional, and practical supports they need to age well—bridging the gap between medical and social care. At the core of this model is the Link Worker: a compassionate professional who helps older adults access programs, foster relationships, and strengthen their sense of belonging.

Since December 2022, over 3,400 social prescriptions have been issued, supporting 2,732 older adults across participating communities. In 2025, three new communities joined the service delivery model, expanding its reach and impact. Outcomes remain strong:

- 89% of older adults reported stabilized or improved contentment with their connections.
- 88% of older adults reported stabilized or improved physical health ratings.

Health professionals are also seeing the benefits. In a 2024 survey, 55% of healthcare providers said they spend less time discussing non-medical needs during appointments, while 89% of CoP members noted stronger referral pathways and collaboration with community partners.

This work highlights how meaningful relationships—paired with system alignment—can improve both individual and community well-being.

Since
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2022

2,732
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88%
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collaboration with
community partners

89%
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contentment with
their connections

“HAA’s support was instrumental in launching our social prescribing program ahead of schedule. They provided us with comprehensive promotional materials and guidance documents and generously met with us many times to answer every question we had...Their contribution truly helped lay the foundation for our success.”

— Anna Stewart, Community Social Development Supervisor, City of Grande Prairie



Strengthening Systems Through Social Prescribing in Medicine Hat

In early 2024, a conversation between Unison at Veiner Centre and Healthy Aging Alberta (HAA) sparked a powerful new initiative: Unison Connect, Medicine Hat's first social prescribing program. While initial funding efforts faced challenges, a new opportunity from the Government of Alberta allowed Unison to bring their vision to life—partnering closely with HAA to align with provincial best practices.

Through shared resources, evaluation tools, and ongoing guidance, HAA helped Medicine Hat build a solid foundation. Link

Workers were trained, connected to a Community of Practice, and equipped with the tools to provide wraparound support to older adults in need.

“Healthy Aging Alberta gave us the foundation we needed to launch quickly, stay aligned with best practices, and focus on what really matters—supporting older adults in our community,” shared Erin Reeder, Manager of Programs, Unison at Veiner Centre.

Since launching in early 2025, the program has seen strong early engagement—54 referrals in just three months, with none declined.

Most clients face barriers like social isolation, low income, and poor health, underscoring the importance of personalized, long-term support.

By bridging health and community care and focusing on genuine relationships, Unison Connect is already helping older adults feel seen, supported, and more connected. As the program grows, so does its ability to uncover service gaps and advocate for stronger, more responsive community supports—anchored in lived experience and local collaboration.

Mobilizing Tools for Sector Growth

From evaluation to framework adoption, our tools and collaborative initiatives continue to build capacity and shape a connected, thriving CBSS sector across Alberta.

Healthy Aging Framework: Focusing on Strategic Alignment

In March 2025, Strathcona County released its own Healthy Aging Framework (HAF), adapting six key determinants from HAA's model to reflect local needs. This work followed public engagement across urban and rural areas and resulted in four locally focused priorities that now guide community planning for older adults.

To make the HAF more accessible, we are adapting it into an interactive digital tool launching later in 2025. This tool will support training and help CBSS organizations apply the framework in their communities, fostering shared understanding and alignment across the sector.

Collaborating for Improved Navigation Solutions

Over the past year, HAA has been working with Alberta Blue Cross and the Government of Alberta to explore the potential of adapting an existing digital platform to help older adults navigate and access non-medical community supports. While still in the initial stages, the collaboration reflects an innovative approach to improving service navigation and accessibility for older adults. Discussions are ongoing as partners explore funding opportunities and potential next steps for implementation.

Evaluating Our Progress

In partnership with PolicyWise for Children & Families, we continued our developmental evaluation work to understand how we are advancing sector goals while ensuring the work is community-led. **Community feedback in 2024 highlighted growing collaboration, trust, and engagement**—signaling a significant shift for HAA from outreach and awareness-building toward fostering strategic collaboration and systems-level change.





amplify

We amplify diverse community voices, strengths, needs, and challenges for collective action.

Elevating Community Voices and Sector Momentum

In 2024–2025, we focused on amplifying what matters most—community voices, lived experiences, and locally driven innovation. Through storytelling, policy engagement, and collaborative design, we brought visibility to the vital role of CBSS organizations. Whether at the provincial table or through grassroots campaigns, our network helped shape the narrative around aging, spotlight emerging solutions, and inspire collective action provincially and nationally.

Momentum in Motion: Telling the Story of Us

This year, our communications helped build and sustain collective momentum across the province. Through platforms like CORE Alberta, our bi-weekly newsletter, and LinkedIn, we amplified the stories, insights, and innovations shaping Alberta’s CBSS sector.

Our newsletter reached 3,169 subscribers, and our LinkedIn community grew to over 2,900 followers. We highlighted sector-led initiatives, shared timely resources, and uplifted the voices of community partners—strengthening a shared narrative of connection, collaboration, and progress across Alberta and beyond.



Email communications

CORE newsletter:
3,169 subscribers

Special mail out:
3,600+ subscribers

Newsletters, updates to community,
and special mail-outs:
45 emails sent



LinkedIn

2,900+ followers
and growing

75,042+ LinkedIn members
reached

154,100+ impressions
total across all posts

Systems Relations and Policy Partnerships

One of the ways we advance systems change is by building trusted relationships with decision-makers and aligning community knowledge with policy development. From provincial advisory committees to national leadership programs, we work to ensure that non-medical, community-based supports are recognized as essential to healthy aging and integrated into future system planning.

Amplifying Community Voices at Provincial Tables: ALA & PCA Ministerial Appointments

To help shape Alberta's evolving continuing care system, Karen McDonald, Provincial Director of Healthy Aging Alberta, was appointed to two key ministerial advisory committees. From December 2024, she has been serving on the Assisted Living Alberta (ALA) Transition Committee—an initiative tasked with developing a long-term vision for a new provincial health agency. The committee's mandate is to integrate social services, medical and non-medical supports, and continuing care. This work aims to improve access and ensure Albertans receive the right care at the right time, strengthening the foundation for a more connected, person-centred system.

Karen was also appointed to the Primary Care Alberta (PCA) Special Advisory Team. Through these roles, HAA is ensuring that community-based, non-medical supports are recognized as essential to aging in place and system transformation.

Building Capacity for Policy Change: Max Bell Foundation Public Policy Training Institute Master Class

In fall 2024, Karen McDonald participated in the inaugural Max Bell Foundation Public Policy Training Institute Master Class—an intensive public policy program bringing together 20 leaders from across Canada. Over three sessions in Calgary, Montreal, and Ottawa, Karen workshopped a policy proposal focused on expanding access to non-medical supports and increasing investment in Alberta's CBSS sector. The experience strengthened HAA's understanding of how to position its work within government policy frameworks and opened the door to future federal engagement.



Many Voices, Shared Momentum: More Ways We're Collaborating on Collective Action

We believe powerful change begins by listening deeply and amplifying what we hear. This year, we showcased the wisdom, creativity, and leadership of older adults and community champions—locally and nationally. From national policy forums to storytelling campaigns to design sprints, these collective voices are shaping the future of aging in Alberta.

Showcasing Alberta's Leadership in Social Prescribing

In September 2024, representatives from HAA and its provincial network of Social Prescribing for Older Adults programs attended Canada's first national Social Prescribing Conference: *Advancing Social Prescribing for Health and Wellbeing*.

Two programs from Edmonton and Innisfail were spotlighted in a panel exploring health equity through rural and urban lenses. HAA team members also led a workshop on the Healthy Aging Asset Index, a made-in-Alberta tool for shared decision-making with older adults. The conference fostered learning, connection, and inspiration to amplify and strengthen social prescribing efforts across Alberta.



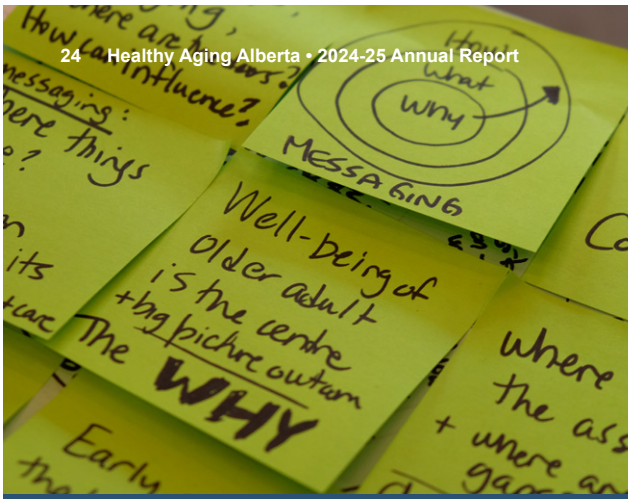
Celebrating and Amplifying Seniors' Week 2025

From June 2-8, 2025, we partnered with Family & Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) to celebrate seniors and champion healthy aging.

Karen McDonald, our Provincial Director and Chair of the Community Leadership Council at HAA, and Kayla Blanchette, President of the Board of Directors for FCSSAA, [collaborated on a statement](#) and [a blog titled, "Celebrating Seniors: The Heart of Alberta's Communities."](#)

To help amplify this message, we launched a LinkedIn campaign featuring the joint statement and blog which had strong community engagement with LinkedIn members and our followers. These results reflect the power of authentic storytelling and community connection, celebrating the diverse voices and experiences of aging in Alberta.

Additionally, our Regional Community Developers attended 13 events across the province—connecting with older adults, local organizations, and community champions. We presented, hosted tables, and mingled as guests, where we heard honest and hopeful feedback from communities and older adults.



Designing the Future, Together

In December 2024, HAA brought together a group of sector leaders for a bold experiment: a three-day design sprint to co-create a shared service delivery model for Alberta's CBSS sector. What emerged was not just a model—it was momentum.

The prototype, developed through human-centred design and deep collaboration, outlines three interconnected pillars: Navigation and Supported Referral Services,

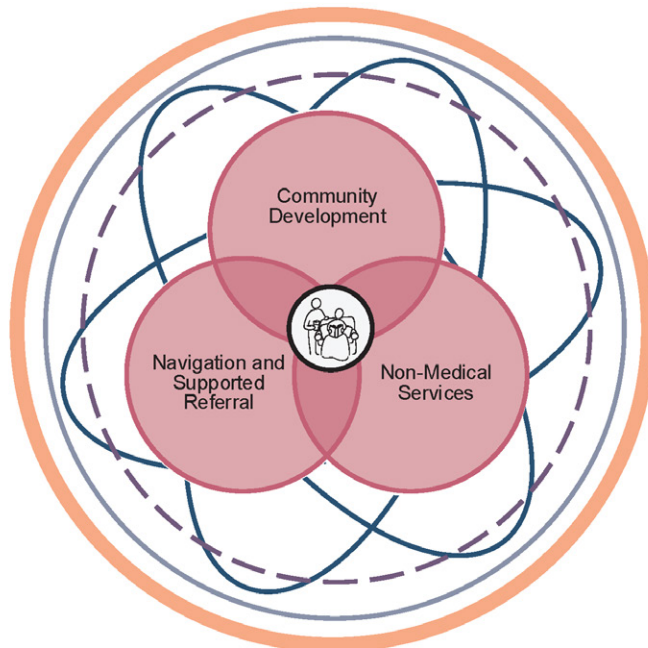
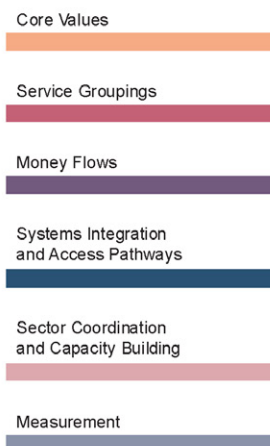
Non-Medical Services, and Community Development. Each is supported by tailored funding mechanisms, with the goal of helping older adults age in place through integrated, accessible supports that span health, housing, and community.

But what made this process incredibly powerful was the trust behind it. **The energy in the room affirmed the need for this model and the sector's readiness to**

lead. Participants saw their realities reflected in the work—often citing, “the time is now”. Stakeholders and government partners alike have since embraced the model's potential.

Now, we move forward—refining, testing, and amplifying this shared vision for aging well across Alberta. Because when we design together, we build something stronger.

The Model at a Glance



Centering Community Voices: Community Leadership Council

The Community Leadership Council (CLC) ensures our work is ‘by community, for community’ by providing strategic direction and amplifying local voices. Comprising 13 dedicated leaders and volunteers from across Alberta, the CLC reflects the diverse experiences, perspectives, and expertise of the CBSS sector within our province.

This year, we welcomed Dr. Mustafa Elhawi (Edmonton), with expertise in immigrant and newcomer services for older adults and community capacity building, and Wendy Evans (Innisfail), with 40+ years of health care expertise, including geriatric assessment, dementia care, healthy aging and much more.





Aligning for Impact: 2024 Strategic Planning Retreat

In fall 2024, HAA staff and the Community Leadership Council gathered for a two-day retreat to reflect on our progress and continue charting our course for our 2024-2028 strategic plan. A highlight was an Indigenous learning session led by Elder Rebecca Martell, which deepened our collective understanding and strengthened our commitment to equity, reconciliation, and meaningful inclusion.

Together, we explored key priorities such as affordable housing, equitable access to healthcare, rural service delivery, and workforce sustainability. The retreat also focused on strengthening our stakeholder engagement, refining strategic language, and building a shared understanding of how to communicate the value of the CBSS sector—laying the foundation for deeper collaboration and impact in the years ahead.

“I’m honoured to be part of the HAA CLC. As a healthcare provider for older adults, my aim is to change perceptions of aging and promote safe, independent, and dignified aging within communities. HAA offers a platform for collaboration and innovation across community, government, and health sectors.”

- Wendy Evans, CLC Member

“[My experience] with the CLC has been one of harnessing the potential and talents that I carry to help amplify the voices of older adults in our communities. I can truly see how my contributions lead to bigger impact across the province. Sometimes you feel lost in the multitude in other circles, but with HAA, I feel like the train doesn’t move without us all on board. It feels like a home. Home is inclusive. Home is belonging. Home is service. [HAA] has helped open my eyes to programs and partnerships that could benefit those I serve. More importantly it is building the capacity of Bridge to Oasis Foundation. HAA is our megaphone in places where we can’t all be, and I’m grateful for the platform they provide to build stronger partnerships among agencies.”

- Bukola Ojemakinde, CLC Member

Our Funders and Supporters

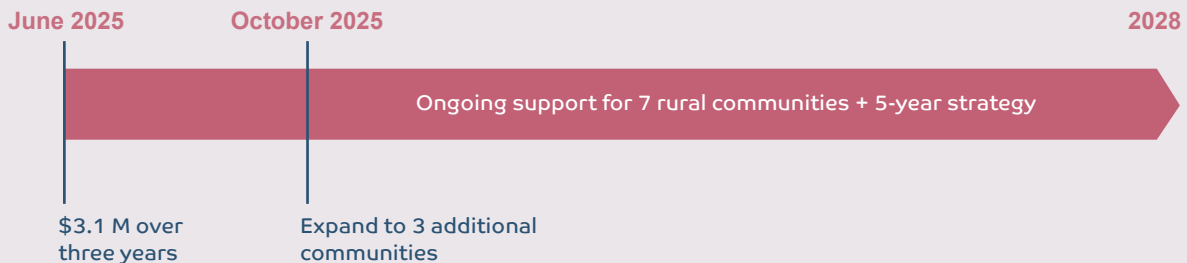
We are grateful to our funders and supporters, including other philanthropists, donors, and event and corporate sponsors, who make our work with the community possible.

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

In June 2025, Waltons Trust renewed funding by providing \$3.1M funding investment over three years for the Social Prescribing provincial service delivery model.

This funding will continue to support the sustainability and growth of social prescribing across Alberta, including:

- Ongoing support for seven rural communities.
- Expanding to an additional three communities by October 2025.
- Supporting knowledge mobilization and the development of a 5-year strategy for social prescribing implementation across Alberta.





Karen McDonald

*Provincial Director and Chair
of the Community Leadership
Council, Healthy Aging Alberta*

The Momentum Ahead

As we look to the future, I feel a deep sense of hope—for our sector, the older adults we serve, and the incredible people doing this work every day.

Five years ago, we were just beginning to build something together. Now, we have a growing network of relationships, a shared vision, and a collective voice gaining momentum. That connection is powerful. It brings resilience, even in the face of challenges. And it gives me real hope that we can keep moving forward—together.

Looking ahead, I see tremendous opportunity for the CBSS sector to grow, align, and be recognized as a vital part of Alberta's systems—particularly in aging in place, primary care, and continuing care. As our sector matures, we're better positioned to take on emerging priorities like emergency preparedness, housing, sustainable funding, and workforce planning.

What makes our sector so special is its responsiveness and heart. We're close to community. We know the people we serve. And we're ready to meet changing needs—because we've built the trust and relationships to do it well.

I feel hopeful that governments and systems are starting to truly see the value of this work. I feel hopeful for the staff and volunteers doing it. And I feel hopeful that as the number of older adults in Alberta continues to grow, more people will recognize them as the incredible assets they are to our communities.

We're in a better place than we were five years ago. And the future feels full of possibility.



