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Dear Charlene,

Earlier this year, I asked communities to send in their strategies and initiatives used to engage socially isolated older adults. Please find a summary of some of your responses in the section below.

Communities in our network have been exploring ways to better engage socially isolated older adults for some time now. However, in recent weeks, reducing social isolation among older adults has become imperative. Communities are working hard to adjust their activities to make sure older adults do not lose their connections with family, friends, support and services during this time. If you would like to learn more about these innovative initiatives, consider participating in our webinar this afternoon, April 16th, on [Older Adults, Physical Distancing and Social Isolation During the COVID-19 Pandemic – What Can Communities Do NOW?](#).

If you are unable to join us this afternoon, the webinar recording will be sent to all members of our distribution list next week. Given the timeliness of this information, we want to share these promising practices with you as soon as possible! Going forward, the AFC Outreach Program will continue to collect and share examples of strategies to support isolated older adults in hopes that you can adapt them in your community.

Also, check out the events section to register for other great webinars happening this month!

Kind regards,

Lisa

—

Lisa Brancaccio

Age-Friendly Communities Knowledge Broker

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[Initiatives To Reduce Social Isolation Among Older Adults](#)

initiative, please send me an email and I can connect you to the appropriate contact.

Amintro

- Amintro is encouraging the community around them to do their part and check in on the older adults in their neighbourhood with a [printable card](#) that can be left in the mailbox. The card provides contact info and a list of options for help that is available to them (grocery pick up, a friendly phone call, posting urgent mail, etc.) all with no in-person contact. Amintro has also launched [Amintro Connects - a free FB group](#) where adults 50+ and those that care about them can connect to share thoughts, questions, experiences, ideas, and more. For more information about these initiatives and Amintro visit their [website](#).

The Community Training and Development Centre

- Networked Communities Challenge is an app for seniors in the Cobourg and Port Hope areas. The app presents a daily challenge linked to information from 120 local organizations, businesses and resources, for example find the local YMCA's exercise schedule. The purpose of each challenge is to motivate, support and encourage seniors to take steps toward becoming more engaged in their communities. The app is available for iPhone and Android users. To get the app, go to the Play Store or App Store, download the Chalenj app and search for the Networked Communities Challenge.

Prince Edward County

- [LoveSong Seniors Housing and Community Hub](#) has partnered with the Municipality of Prince Edward County to purchase and renovate a school to create a community of 50 affordable housing units for seniors. The complex will also incorporate a Community Hub with a variety of services and amenities for use of the future LoveSong tenants as well as the entire community.

Aurora

- [Seniors' Centres Without Walls](#) is a free, telephone-based activity program aimed to connect older adults who cannot socialize out of their home as much as they would like. Participants call in to a teleconference system to learn about health-related information and make social connections through conversations with peers and professionals from the community.

Centre for Elder Research at Sheridan College

- The [Social Isolation and Loneliness Toolkit](#) assists individuals who interact or work with older adults such as caregivers, healthcare workers, faith leaders and community organizations. It includes a checklist to determine if an older adult might be at risk of social isolation and a list of research-informed tips for older adults get connected.

Ottawa and Council on Aging Ottawa

- [iGenOttawa](#) promotes the value of intergenerational connections, teaming up with community partners to highlight, encourage and initiate activities that bring different generations together for the benefit of the community.
- [A Friendly Voice](#) is a program offered by Rural Ottawa South Support Services. Through their conversations, volunteers will encourage and support callers to engage with their community. If requested, volunteers can assist the older adult by providing contact information for local services and programs from publicly accessible information sources.

Canadore College

- [The Village Collective Impact Project](#) is an intergenerational, social-inclusion model to realize healthy aging. It is funded by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program. Currently in its first year, the project will work collaboratively with seniors, stakeholders and caregivers, regional community organizations and agencies, to focus on developing new models of healthy ageing and inclusion efforts aimed at improving outcomes of seniors and Indigenous seniors living in the Nipissing and Parry Sounds Districts.

Hamilton Aging in Community

- Hamilton Aging in Community is a group of community-minded maturing adults and seniors in the Hamilton area who are committed to exploring and initiating integrated approaches to living as we age. An Introduction to Cohousing event was hosted as the group works towards establishing the first cohousing community in Hamilton. An online Coffee and Conversation meeting will take place on Saturday, April 25 at 11:00 am for anyone who would like to find out more about Cohousing in Hamilton or has questions about cohousing.

London

- The [Leisure Buddies](#) pilot program pairs an isolated or at-risk older adult with a peer 'buddy', who then attend programs together in the community.

Upcoming Events

April 16

[Older Adults, Physical Distancing and Social Isolation During the COVID-19 Pandemic – What Can Communities Do NOW?](#) (webinar)

[Poverty in the face of COVID-19](#) (webinar)

April 21

[Reframing the Response to COVID-19: Applying Reframed Language to Counteract Ageism](#) (webinar)

April 28

[Social support availability and executive function in the baseline cohort of the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging](#) (webinar)

[Connectedness, Purpose, and Belonging: Role of Social Prescribing in Integrating Health Care and Social Supports](#) (webinar)

April 30

[Supporting Family Caregivers Of Older Adults Through Times Of Stress And Isolation](#) (webinar)

October 1

[NIA First Annual Conference: Can Canada Afford to Age?](#) (Ryerson University)

October 22 - 24

[CAG2020 Closing the Research-Practice Gap: Knowledge Mobilization & Implementation Science](#) (Regina)

March 3 - 5, 2021

[IFA "Rights Matter" 15th Global Conference on Ageing](#) (Niagara Falls)

Webinar Reading List

Social Isolation and Loneliness

- [Loneliness in older adults](#)
- [Why Staying Connected To Your Community Is Good for Your Health](#)
- [Five things you should know about loneliness and its effect on older adults](#)
- [Loneliness as a public health issue: the impact of loneliness on health care utilization among older adults](#)
- [The Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging \(CLSA\) Report on Health and Aging in Canada](#)
- [Social isolation and loneliness: the new geriatric giants](#)

Social Prescribing

- [What is social prescribing?](#)
- [The Social Prescribing Network](#)
- [Rx Community - Social Prescribing in Ontario Final Report](#)
- [Social Prescribing Backgrounder English](#)
- [Social Prescribing: Creating Pathways Towards Better Health and Wellness](#), Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, 2019
- [Prescriptions are for more than just drugs. Ontario Health Teams should use 'social prescribing' to improve our health and wellbeing](#), Healthy Debates, 2020

COVID-19 and Older Adults

- [RGP of Toronto COVID-19 Resource Page](#)
 - [Doctor's Note: Why are older people more vulnerable to COVID-19?](#)
 - [Ontario Protecting Seniors During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#)
 - [Seven Quick Tips For Helping Older Adults Through The Coronavirus Crisis](#)
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- [Senior to Senior Anti-Bullying Toolkit](#)
- Need Volunteers? Want to Volunteer? Visit [SPARK Ontario](#)
- University of Waterloo Network for Aging Research [Request for Research Proposals on COVID-19 and Aging](#)

About the Ontario Age-Friendly Communities (AFC) Outreach Program

The AFC Outreach Program is administered by the University of Waterloo, Queen's University, Huntington/Laurentian University, and the Seniors Health Knowledge Network.

The AFC Outreach Program builds on and complements Ontario's [AFC Planning Guide](#) and the AFC Planning Grant Program. The program aims to raise awareness about AFCs, facilitate connectedness within and between communities, and increase the capacity for local planning and implementation of age-friendly initiatives.

The AFC Outreach Program helps communities, including recipients of Ontario's AFC Planning Grant: increase awareness of age-friendly planning principles; share best practices; and start, continue, evaluate and improve on their AFC action plans.

Stay Connected!

Visit our website in [French](#) or [English](#).
Contact [Lisa Brancaccio](#), the Ontario AFC Knowledge Broker.
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Do you have news, resources or an event that you would like shared in our next newsletter? Email [Lisa Brancaccio](#) with your content.



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