Let’s Talk
Isolation and Loneliness Among Seniors
What is Social Isolation?
Approximately 1000 people turn 65 each month in Nova Scotia.
# Impacts of Social Isolation

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Lower general well-being</th>
<th>Higher level of disability from chronic diseases</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased rates of premature death</td>
<td>Higher depression rates</td>
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<td>Increased use of social and health services</td>
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Risk Factors

- Loss of Spouse
- Poverty
- Transportation Issues
- Retirement, Living Alone
- Poor Health
- Aging
- Self Esteem
- Disabilities, Mobility
- Place of Residence
- Age, Gender, Race
- Reduced Social Networks
Why We Did This Work

- Social Isolation
- Loneliness
- Depression
- Mental Health
- Crime Prevention Challenges
- Elder Abuse
- Poor Overall Health
In the Fall of 2014 Community Links, Senior’s Outreach and Pictou County Municipalities Crime Prevention Association (PCMCPA) partnered to engage older adults in safe and welcoming conversations about their quality of life in Pictou County.
Funding was received from the Pictou West and Pictou Central and East Community Health Boards.
Educate

Train

Core Team

Reward

Empower
1. 2nd Baptist Church
2. Public Health Building
3. River John
4. Bridgeville
5. Pictou Landing First Nation
6. Pictou New Horizons
7. Lismore
8. Caribou River
9. West Branch
10. New Glasgow Library
Planning Process

- Literature Review
- Define Need, Purpose, Principles
- Train Project Leads as Facilitators
- Host Five Sessions
- Analyze Outcomes
- Analysis, Report & Recommendations
Project Goals

- Understand challenges faced by seniors in the community
- Map services seniors access (or reasons why they cannot access those services)
- Empower seniors to increase their capacity to lead healthy and safe lives
We must engage older adults in a meaningful and safe way, and hear their stories to empower them to help create a safe and healthy community.

Need and Principles

We must be:
- Innovative
- Welcoming
- Respectful
- Impactful
- Transparent
- Supportive
Process / World Café
| What do you vision as a safe and healthy community? | What supports do you access in your community? | What makes it difficult for you to participate? | What are the opportunities as we age together? | What is one thing you are taking away from today? |
Visioning: Top Responses

Accessible & affordable

Open communication

Strong relationships with family, friends and neighbours

Strong sense of community
Supports: Top Responses

- Resources and services including police, fire, EMS and churches
- Family, friends and neighbours
- Health and health care services
- Communication supports, including education and awareness
Challenges: Top Responses

Accessibility & Transportation

Poor self-esteem & Mental health

Lack of health & Health care

Cost of services & Healthy food
Opportunities: Top Responses

- Advocacy and improvement in people’s attitudes
- Communication, skill & knowledge share
- Volunteerism
- Community building, integrating elders
Project Recommendations

- Asset Mapping
- Population Health
- Storytelling and Communication
- Advocacy
Emerging Results

‘Meals on Wheels’ program in Bridgeville

Elders Circle in Pictou Landing
Think differently about how change can happen to create healthy and safe communities.

Shift the attitude from ‘someone has to do something for us’ to ‘WE CAN DO SOMETHING FOR US’
Further Information

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