

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa
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**Submitted by
Soumis par:**

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Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2020-OPH-HPP-0002

**SUBJECT: OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH'S PLAN TO SUPPORT OLDER ADULTS
TO AGE WELL IN OUR COMMUNITY**

**OBJET: PLAN DE SANTÉ PUBLIQUE OTTAWA VISANT À AIDER LES
PERSONNES ÂGÉES D'OTTAWA À BIEN VIEILLIR**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit approve Ottawa Public Health's 2020-2022 Aging Well Plan, as outlined in this report and detailed in Document 1, attached.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la ville d'Ottawa approuve le plan *Bien vieillir* 2020-2022 de Santé publique Ottawa, décrit dans le présent rapport et détaillé dans le document 1, ci-joint.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, Ottawa Public Health released the [Next Steps to Support Healthy Aging Ottawa](#) report, providing a snapshot of the increasing and diverse older adult population in Ottawa.

By 2035, one in three Ottawa residents will be aged 55 and older. Not only is Ottawa's population of older adults growing, it is becoming more diverse, with almost 16% of older adults identifying as a member of a visible minority. Older adults continue to enjoy life and contribute to society, yet the incidence of chronic disease, injury and disability becomes more prevalent with age and is higher among vulnerable older adult groups.

Healthy aging can delay and minimize the burdens of chronic disease and disabilities in later life and save health care costs. It can also contribute to prolonging quality of life for aging seniors and those who care for them. OPH envisions a city where all older adults and their caregivers are healthy, safe, valued and actively engaged in their well-being within a compassionate and inclusive environment.

In alignment with the newly released City of Ottawa Older Adult Plan 2020-2022, the City of Ottawa's Strategic Initiative: Thriving Communities, OPH's Strategic Plan 2019-2020 as well as other provincial and federal strategies, OPH developed a 2020-2020 Aging Well Plan (Document 1). The plan has four focus areas:

1. Ottawa as an age-friendly and compassionate city.
2. Older adults and caregivers are engaged, their voices are heard and valued.
3. Caregivers of older adults are supported and have increased access to resources to care for themselves and others.
4. Older adults receive high-quality information, public health programs and services that they need to maintain and improve their health.

OPH's core work and areas for enhancement flow from these four focus areas, as detailed in the plan. Periodic review that incorporates community and stakeholder feedback will help to evolve activities as needed.

The Aging Well Plan utilized the older adult consultations done recently by the City of Ottawa in undertaking the Older Adult Plan¹ and by the community partners in the development of the Regional Caregiver Strategy.² Further, OPH consulted with various key partners throughout the development of the Aging Well Plan to validate the four areas of focus and activities identified therein.

RÉSUMÉ

En 2018, Santé publique Ottawa (SPO) a publié le rapport « [Prochaines étapes afin de favoriser le vieillissement sain à Ottawa](#) » qui donne un aperçu de la population de personnes âgées d'Ottawa, qui est grandissante et diversifiée.

D'ici 2035, un résident d'Ottawa sur trois aura 55 ans ou plus. La population de la ville vieillit, mais se diversifie aussi, avec près de 16 % des personnes âgées qui affirment appartenir à une minorité visible. Si les personnes âgées continuent de profiter de la vie et de contribuer à la société, il n'en demeure pas moins que les risques de maladies chroniques, de blessures et de handicaps augmentent avec l'âge et sont plus présents chez les personnes âgées vulnérables.

Le vieillissement en santé peut retarder l'apparition de maladies chroniques et de handicaps dans les dernières années de vie et en minimiser la gravité, ce qui contribue à atténuer les coûts pour le système de santé et à préserver la qualité de vie des personnes âgées et de leurs aidants. SPO aimerait faire d'Ottawa une ville où toutes les personnes âgées et leurs aidants seraient en santé et en sécurité, se sentiraient appréciés et contribueraient activement à leur bien-être, dans un environnement compatissant et inclusif.

Dans la foulée du Plan relatif aux personnes âgées 2020-2022 récemment publié et de l'initiative stratégique *Quartiers prospères* de la Ville d'Ottawa, de son Plan stratégique 2019-2020 ainsi que d'autres stratégies provinciales et municipales, SPO a élaboré le plan *Bien vieillir* 2020-2022. Celui-ci s'articule autour de quatre priorités :

1. Faire d'Ottawa une ville-amie des aînés et une collectivité compatissante.
2. Consulter les personnes âgées et leurs aidants pour que leurs avis soient écoutés et pris en compte.
3. Soutenir les aidants des personnes âgées et faciliter l'accès aux ressources dont ils ont besoin pour prendre soin d'eux-mêmes et d'autrui.
4. Offrir de l'information, des programmes de santé publique et des services de qualité aux personnes âgées afin qu'elles puissent maintenir et améliorer leur état de santé.

Comme l'explique en détail le plan, la mission de SPO et ses points à améliorer découlent de ces quatre priorités. Des examens périodiques, tenant compte de la

rétroaction de la population et des intervenants, contribueront à orienter les activités selon les besoins.

Le plan *Bien vieillir* repose sur les consultations récemment menées par la Ville d'Ottawa dans le cadre de la révision du Plan relatif aux personnes âgées ainsi que sur celles menées par différents partenaires communautaires en vue de l'élaboration de la stratégie régionale de soutien aux aidants. Tout au long de l'élaboration du plan *Bien vieillir*, SPO a en outre consulté différents partenaires importants afin de valider la pertinence des quatre priorités et des activités connexes.

BACKGROUND

By 2035, one in three Ottawa residents will be aged 55 and older.³ This represents an increase of 134,000 people. The greatest change is in the proportion whom are living to be 85 or older; in 2018, 2% were 85 or older, by 2035 this will increase to 4%.⁴ Not only is Ottawa's population of older adults growing, it is becoming more diverse with almost 16% of older adults identifying as a member of a visible minority.⁵ In addition, approximately 10% of Ottawa residents aged 55 years and older are living in low income⁶ and approximately 20% live alone.⁷

Frail individuals have a higher risk of poor health outcomes and an increased need for health care services.⁸ In Ottawa, approximately 19% of those aged 65 and older living in the community can be considered frail, with an additional 26% of those aged 65 to 74 being "pre-frail".⁹ Injuries from falls cause the most injury-related emergency room visits, hospitalizations and deaths in those aged 65 and older.^{10 11} Dementia is now the leading cause of death in women aged 65 and older and the second leading cause of death in men (behind ischemic heart disease).¹² While over half of Ottawa's older adults rate their health as excellent or very good, 10% of older adults account for 60% of annual health care spending.¹³

Feedback directly from older adults, caregivers and front-line service providers in Ottawa suggests a need for significant shifts in attitudes, resources, programming and infrastructure to better support older residents to, not only age well, but also to access health and social services and to experience compassionate end of life care.

In Ottawa, much work has already been undertaken to adapt to the increases in older adults. The health sector has made some changes as the incidence of chronic disease, injury and disability become more prevalent with age. Locally, efforts have been directed at innovative programs such as: Aging in Place to reduce the burden on Alternate Level of Care beds; Health Links to improve coordination of care for the most

complex needs; and a Regional Falls Prevention Strategy (co-led by OPH) to reduce life changing injury. Currently, OPH is also participating in provincially-led health system transformation initiatives by working with local Ontario Health Teams to improve the integration of services and coordination of care and to reduce hallway medicine.

At a municipal level, the City of Ottawa adopted the World Health Organization (WHO) Age-Friendly Framework in 2012 and implemented two action plans to advance social and physical environments. The City's newly approved [Older Adult Action Plan 2020-2022](#) identifies four strategic areas for action: Aging with Choice, Transportation and Mobility, Wellbeing, and Communication. Ottawa Public Health is actively involved in the municipal plan and has begun work on the Wellbeing theme, which focuses on social inclusion and mental health.

In addition to municipal and institutional efforts, Ottawa community members are engaged in addressing aging and end of life issues. Organizations such as the Council on Aging of Ottawa, Compassionate Ottawa, the United Way, and the Champlain Dementia Network have worked to ensure services, policies, and programs are developed based on the real needs and desires of older adults.

Some sub-populations experience conditions that make them more vulnerable to poor health, such as those experiencing low income, unstable housing, social isolation, language and cultural barriers, mobility issues. When one contrasts a healthy and active 55-year-old living in their family home with extensive social supports and a 90-year-old widow with dementia living alone on a limited pension, their needs vary considerably. Some may face more than one challenge and it is by hearing from people with lived experience that agencies can truly develop effective services. While many organizations strive to meaningfully engage older adults and their caregivers, there is room to improve inclusion of community members' voices in planning and programming.

Unpaid caregivers support aging well by providing assistance in coordinating appointments, doing shopping, meal preparation, house cleaning and maintenance, and transportation, among other supports.¹⁴ Almost half of Canadians, at some point in their life, have provided some type of care to a family member or friend with a long-term health condition, disability or aging needs.¹⁵ An estimated 1 in 8 Canadian adults provided such care for a parent in the past year.¹⁶

Twenty percent of caregivers spend 20 hours or more weekly providing such supports.¹⁷ Locally, community partners undertook an extensive consultation process that revealed the following needs: reworking the health care and social services systems; education and training; promoting caregiver health and wellness; and strengthening circles of

support and community for caregivers. This informed the Eastern Ontario Caregiver Strategy¹⁸ that will be released in the spring of 2020.

OPH uses a population health approach to improve the health of older adults and their caregivers. Interventions range from informing healthy public policies to working with our partners across sectors to support and promote health in our communities, at the health care system level through to individual-oriented education and support. Surveillance activities contribute local epidemiological data to agencies for planning purposes. Health protection activities include: food handling inspections and infection control in residential facilities, including outbreak management; flu immunization clinics in underserved areas; and dental services to those experiencing low income. Health promotion efforts have worked to reduce falls, reach isolated seniors, support caregivers, and encourage healthy eating and active living. Through partnerships, policies and advocacy, particular efforts are made to reduce health inequalities and improve health equity. These activities were detailed in reports to the Board of Health in 2011,¹⁹ 2014,²⁰ and 2018²¹. OPH is informed by local reports and plans as well as the following key guidance documents:

- The World Health Organization (WHO) [Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health \(2016-2030\)](#)²² and the anticipated [Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030](#).²³
- The [National Seniors Strategy](#) (2016)²⁴
- The [Aging with Confidence: Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors in 2018](#)²⁵. Further, Ontario is currently developing a new government-wide [Senior Strategy](#).

DISCUSSION

Through this report, the Board of Health is asked to approve Ottawa Public Health's 2020-2022 Aging Well Plan, as described in this report and detailed in Document 1, attached. This work contributes to Ottawa Public Health's 2019-2022 Strategy through the strategic direction to *influence social and physical environments that support health and wellbeing*. The following pages provide an overview of the Plan.

What aging well means is personal, with a multitude of influencing factors from genetics to lifestyle to culture. The social determinants of health, such as housing, income, education, and life experiences with trauma, racism and discrimination, can result in health inequities in some populations of older adults. OPH envisions a city where all

older adults and their caregivers are healthy, safe, valued and actively engaged in their well-being within a compassionate and inclusive environment.

In developing its 2020-2022 Aging Well Plan, OPH considered existing epidemiological data and best practices as well as feedback from Ottawa's older adults, caregivers and community agencies. The plan has four focus areas:

1. **Ottawa as an Age-Friendly and Compassionate City.** There is an identified need to have more supportive physical and social environments for all the natural stages of life - healthy aging, declining health and end of life. Creating an age-friendly city helps people make healthy choices and be less susceptible to injuries and disease through infrastructure design and maintenance, policies and services. Older adults are looking for social inclusion, respect and support during good health and chronic illness, disability and end of life.
2. **Older adults and their caregivers are engaged, their voices are heard and valued.** Effectiveness of programs and policies depends on accurate needs assessment, practical and realistic planning and implementation of programs, services and initiatives, and incorporation of honest constructive feedback. Given the diversity of older adults and the complexity of the scenarios they face, OPH will ensure the participation of older adults in OPH activities and advocate for their voice at all appropriate tables.
3. **Caregivers of older adults are supported and have increased access to resources to care for themselves and others.** The input provided during consultations undertaken for the Eastern Ontario Caregiver Strategy were blunt and eye opening. Older adults and their caregivers face tremendous challenges to navigate health and social services. The identified need to "rework the system" speaks to not only the gaps in supports, but also the frustration and difficulty in accessing existing resources.
4. **Older adults receive high-quality, evidence-based information, programs and services that they need to maintain and improve their health.** Older adults expressed a desire to make independent, informed decisions for themselves, to self-determine their care. Older adults want to be able to access needed, appropriate services and supports over time as their needs change. They want to receive information on programs and services in many forms and want to see collaboration across organizations to ensure the information reaches those that need to see it. OPH will work with municipal, health and social service partners to promote and expand the availability of preventative health programs.

OPH will consider the needs of diverse groups of older adults in program planning and service delivery and offer more support to isolated and disadvantaged older adults.

The Plan flows from these four focus areas, with details of core work as well as specific actions for enhancements, as detailed in the attached Document 1. It builds on existing resources and partnerships to advance healthy aging. Some examples of work that OPH will undertake are listed below:

- collaborate with partners to implement actions from the City of Ottawa Older Adult Plan 2020-2022;
- provide an age-friendly lens to policies, services and structures that will improve built and social environments for older adults that are inclusive of healthy aging, living with chronic conditions and end of life care;
- use social media to engage and share with older adults and caregivers by launching a first-of-its-kind public-health run Facebook account for Older Adults;
- collaborate with community partners within the Ontario Health Teams to increase coordination and integration of services for older adults;
- enhance processes to engage older adults in the planning of programs and services, including disadvantaged populations;
- tailor and deliver preventative programming, including work on stigma and ageism; delivery of targeted immunization and dental services; education on topics of interest such as brain health, falls prevention, mental health, substance use (opioids and cannabis), sexual health, healthy eating and active living.

Periodic review and evaluation that incorporates community and stakeholder feedback will help to evolve activities as needed.

Next Steps:

- Implementing the 2020-2022 Aging Well Plan
- Sharing the Aging Well Plan with internal and external stakeholders.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

The focus areas and activities listed in the Aging-Well Plan 2020-2022 benefit all older residents of Ottawa, regardless of their place of residence; for example, offering Better

Strengthen Better Balance education sessions in rural locations. The activities listed in the plan will have positive impacts on the quality of life of older residents living in rural areas.

CONSULTATION

The Aging Well Plan builds on the older adult consultations recently completed by the City of Ottawa in undertaking the Older Adult Plan²⁶ and by the community partners in the development of the Regional Caregiver Strategy.²⁷ Further, OPH consulted with various key partners throughout the development of the Aging Well Plan to validate the four areas of focus and activities identified therein. Partners acknowledged the unique public health contribution of a population health approach and OPH's role as a connector organization that operates across sectors, settings and populations.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to implementing the recommendation in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report. The Aging Well Plan will be implemented using existing resources.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

The Aging Well Plan will support reducing, removing and preventing barriers that may be experienced by older adults and people with disabilities. Activities related to the Plan include work to improve physical and social environments, which in turn may help to reduce health inequities for residents who face barriers to better health.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 - Aging Well Plan 2020-2022

DISPOSITION

OPH will implement the Aging Well Plan, as described in this report and detailed in Document 1, and report back to the Board of Health on its achievements in this regard in 2022.

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- ¹ Public Findings from Community Consultations OAP 2019-2022. 2019. City of Ottawa.
- ² Eastern Ontario Caregiver Strategy. Sept. 25, 2019. United Way East Ontario, Champlain Dementia Network, Champlain Community Support Network
- ³ Population Projections 2018, 2036, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH Ontario, Date Extracted Oct 2017
- ⁴ *ibid*
- ⁵ Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016190
- ⁶ Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016127
- ⁷ Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016029
- ⁸ Hoover M, Rotermann M, Sanmartin C, Bernier J. Validation of an index to estimate the prevalence of frailty among community-dwelling seniors. *Health Rep.* 2013 Sep;24(9):10-7
- ⁹ Canadian Community Health Survey 2013-2014, Statistics Canada, Share File, Ontario MOHLTC
- ¹⁰ Unscheduled emergency department visits, National Ambulatory Care Reporting System. (2017). Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHealth Ontario. Extracted October 10, 2018.
- ¹¹ Ottawa Public Health. 2018. Ottawa Older Adult Health Overview.
- ¹² *ibid*
- ¹³ Sinha, Samir (2012). Living Longer, Living Well. Report Submitted to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and the Minister Responsible for Seniors on recommendations to Inform a Seniors Strategy for Ontario. Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Government of Ontario
- ¹⁴ Statistics Canada. 2018. Caregivers in Canada, 2018. Available at <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200108/dq200108a-eng.htm>
- ¹⁵ Sinha M. Portrait of Care Givers, 2012. Statistics Canada. Catalogue number 89-652-X-No. 001. Available from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-652-x/89-652-x2013001-eng.pdf>
- ¹⁶ Sinha M. Portrait of Care Givers, 2012. Statistics Canada. Catalogue number 89-652-X-No. 001. Available from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-652-x/89-652-x2013001-eng.pdf>
- ¹⁷ *ibid*
- ¹⁸ Eastern Ontario Caregiver Strategy. Sept. 25, 2019. United Way East Ontario, Champlain Dementia Network, Champlain Community Support Network
- ¹⁹ Ottawa Public Health. 2011. Seniors' Healthy Aging Strategy. Available at <https://app06.ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/obh/2011/06-20/ACS2011-OPH-HPDP-0001.htm>
- ²⁰ Ottawa Public Health. 2014. Seniors' Healthy Aging Strategy Update. Available at (link doesn't work) <https://app06.ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/obh/2014/01-20/Report%20-%20Seniors.pdf>
- ²¹ Ottawa Public Health. 2018. Next Steps to Support Healthy Aging in Ottawa. Available at (link doesn't work) <http://app05.ottawa.ca/sirepub/cache/2/ds2q42dqzqzq2nctxq1d51ze/54460201092020083244442.PDF>
- ²² World Health Organization. [Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health \(2016-2030\)](#)
- ²³ World Health Organization. [Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030](#)
- ²⁴ [National Seniors Strategy](#)
- ²⁵ Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term-Care. 2017. Confidence in Aging: Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors. Available at https://files.ontario.ca/ontarios_seniors_strategy_2017.pdf
- ²⁶ Public Findings from Community Consultations OAP 2019-2022. 2019. City of Ottawa.

²⁷ Eastern Ontario Caregiver Strategy. Sept. 25, 2019. United Way East Ontario, Champlain Dementia Network, Champlain Community Support Network