



# AGE FRIENDLY Manitoba

Communities committed to  
healthy, active aging

**Mission:** To facilitate healthy aging by providing leadership and encouraging collaboration in creating age-friendly places (communities) that optimize the ability of all older Manitobans to do the things they feel are important.

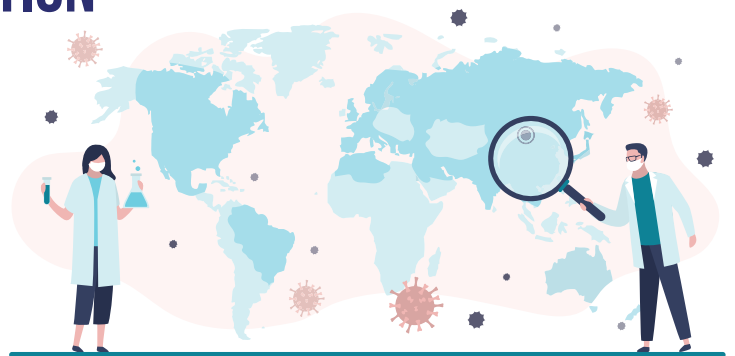
## GLOBAL COLLABORATION: LOCAL ACTION

In the April edition of this newsletter, we announced the launch of "Celebrating Community Collaboration... a series of Short Stories". On the theme of collaboration, the ongoing work of Manitoba Association of Senior Centres (MASC) and the Age-Friendly Manitoba Initiative (AFMI) continues to be strongly influenced by the World Health Organization (WHO). In particular, there are three initiatives that provide resources we use in our work ...in our collaboration... with you and all communities across Manitoba:

1. Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities, started in 2006
2. World Report on Aging and Health, released in 2015, and
3. Decade of Healthy Aging 2021 - 2030

The work of the WHO falls within two broad areas of responsibility. The first is managing the response to major global health priorities such as tuberculosis, malaria... and of course, right now, COVID 19. It is their second role, helping with health systems and access to health care around the world, where WHO has invested in the 3 initiatives noted above. On our theme of collaboration, WHO is a master of collaboration!

Founded in 1948, WHO is the health agency of the United Nations (UN). There are 197 countries in the world... 194 are member states of the WHO. Its Head Office is located in Geneva with a second key office at the UN Headquarters in New York City. In addition, WHO maintains six Regional Offices and 150 field offices. One of those Regional Offices is for the Americas and includes Canada, as part of the Pan-American Health Organization. The PAHO head office is in Washington, DC, coordinating activities through 27 country offices and 3 specialized centres.



As you can see, there are a lot of moving parts, many competing demands and the need for a lot of collaboration to achieve success. The goal of these collaborative efforts... is the inclusion of health in all public policies and the engagement of all sectors in efforts to ensure that people live longer, healthier lives, with good health as their most valuable resource.

For Canada, Health Canada and in particular the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is our point of contact with the WHO. We participate on PHAC's Pan-Canadian Age-friendly Reference Group, which facilitates collaborative sharing and efforts amongst representatives from across Canada. PHAC is also providing leadership to Canada's contributions to the Decade of Healthy Aging, and we are moving forward in Manitoba to support efforts in line with the four action areas of the Decade, namely supporting age-friendly environments, combatting ageism, and encouraging efforts to enhance integrated and long-term care.

The following article provides information on our collaborative efforts in Manitoba and our engagement with communities, in our efforts to help ensure the people in your community, all Manitobans...live longer, healthier lives.

*Jim Hamilton, Consultant, AF Resource Team*

# Building Strong Communities

Being Connected through: Communication, Coordination, Collaboration and Celebration strengthens the Cohesiveness of our communities. Everyone is welcome to contribute, and when community leaders and age-friendly champions come together they lead the way toward a holistic and coordinated approach. By communicating and networking we learn more about the needs and the barriers we face, and sharing that information moves us closer to our goals. Once the planning and action begins, age-friendly leaders can coordinate the elements needed to bring about relevant changes.

Collaboration is an opportunity to envision a stronger community by viewing all aspects through an age-friendly lens, meshing theory with the practical. It encourages participation and allows for uniqueness through the formation of ideas and innovative approaches. It will create occasions to contribute our thoughts about the built environment surrounding us; the outdoor spaces, public buildings, businesses, housing and the transportation options and safety factors; so our communities are where we want to stay, live, play, volunteer and work. We also need to consider the social fabric of a community so that where we live is friendly and interesting. It includes the social opportunities for participation, the respect and social inclusion for all ages including older adults, as well as opportunities for volunteering, civic participation and employment. Community support and health services are also an important contribution to our quality of life. Forming the plans and identifying the actions that will move us forward cohesively will engage the local government, community organizations, schools, businesses and neighbours. Once we reap the benefits of our collaborative efforts and accomplishments, we can celebrate and appreciate the successes that make our communities unique and a place where we want to raise our

families and age among familiar friends and places.

Collaboration of the Age-Friendly Manitoba journey began in 2008 and included the efforts of the Government of Manitoba, Seniors and Healthy Aging Secretariat, who provided the funding, and the University of Manitoba, Centre on Aging who provided the research component and authored helpful reports. The Association of Manitoba Municipalities, along with the Manitoba Government jointly invited communities to join the Age-Friendly Manitoba initiative. Communities were offered orientations, community consultations and action planning support. Word spread, interest was peaked and today 92 rural and urban jurisdictions participate. The U of M Architecture, Department of City Planning graduate students recognized an opportunity to collaborate with individual rural communities and invited them to take part in their planning projects. They offered well thought out proposals with sketches of age-friendly designs, that were unique for each community. The Transportation Options Network for Seniors (TONS) became involved to support collaboration and networking for rural transportation providers. Currently, the Manitoba Association of Senior Centres (MASC) provides the leadership for Age-Friendly Manitoba, and due to its extensive connections, the Age-Friendly initiative continues to grow. Other collaborative efforts have included regional health authorities, the Manitoba Association of Senior Support Coordinators, Recreation Manitoba, Manitoba Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Corporations as they provide assistance bringing communities together for regional collaborative opportunities.

Collaborating within our communities and beyond provides benefits that can be beneficial today and far into the future.

*Louise Hutton, Consultant AF Resource Team*



## VICTORIES THROUGH THE VIRUS - RURAL RESOURCE COORDINATORS

Nestled in all areas of the province are wonderful people that passionately work to better the lives of older adults in their communities. You may know or even be one as the Senior Resource Coordinator is often deeply rooted in the Age Friendly initiatives taking place in communities. To support and enhance lives of those living in rural Manitoba through this challenging time, coordinators have adapted and have been able to enhance the lives of many in caring and creative ways.

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Many have stayed personally connected with their community through telephone calls and emails. In addition, social media posts, website updates and newsletters are shared to assist in staying connected and providing activities to do at home, and of course to keep clients updated on the pandemic situation. Pen pal programs organized in some communities have proved to be a great way to promote the positive feelings of being connected while bridging generational gaps.

The “virtual world” has and is being used in a variety of ways: Christmas light tours, book clubs, line dancing classes, educational presentations and craft classes to name a few. I encourage you to check out the Infinite Life Solutions funded by safeathomeMB.ca Facebook page. Here you will learn about

what fabulous things can happen when collaboration takes place. Lorne Community Support Services and Somerset Villa partnered up to create stellar programs for their area residents – theme weeks, craft classes, bingo, exercise classes and online tea parties are just a sprinkling of the activities generated out of this venture. Area residents cannot say enough good things about how beneficial and happy they are for having these opportunities.

Many coordinators have reported that with the help of grants, local businesses/service clubs, municipal support, volunteers and community member donations they were able to offer special delivery gift/care packs and/or activity bags and meal programs to the older adults in their communities. Thanks to donations one coordinator was even able to

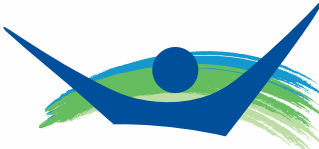


deliver fresh local produce to those living alone in their community....this serving a dual purpose – providing great sustenance and an opportunity to do a wellness check! Connecting with community, especially those that are alone and/or isolated is reportedly a key focus for many if not all coordinators.

Having a great understanding of the importance of both mental and physical health of the people they serve, many coordinators consider their positions more than just a “job,” it’s a way to really care and connect with people to allow them to comfortably live out their lives where they choose for as long as possible. Often with limited means and resources, many have turned beans into bean stalks – growing communities in positive ways. If you are reading this and are a coordinator, thank you for all you do! If you are not a coordinator might I encourage you to “hitch your wagon to one” - their passion and drive can be infectious.

Brenda Tonn, Consultant, AF Resource Team

Save the Date!



## Manitoba 55+ Games

PRESENTED BY **PLAYNOW**  
Virtually June 14- July 16, until we can meet again.

# We want to count you in!

Get Involved, AAIM for Fun in the 2021 Virtual MB 55+ Games

WHEN: Monday, June 14 – Friday, July 16, 2021


WHERE: Close to home, safely in your community with the people in your ‘bubble.’

Choose from many events available, register, track your activity and then let us know what you’ve done – it’s that easy!

Registration is FREE! \*Registration is required to be eligible for prizes\*


More information will be available soon; visit our website: [www.activeagingmb.ca](http://www.activeagingmb.ca)





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