

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.



AN EXPLORATION OF THE ROLES OF THE MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR COMMUNITIES

Happy New Year! As we step into 2025, we would like to take a moment to highlight the role of the Manitoba Association of Senior Communities (MASC) and share our organization's passion and structure with you.

MASC is dedicated to the collective goal of supporting and enhancing aging through three "lines of business": Age Friendly Manitoba, Membership Organizations, and Social Prescribing.

Here's how each area contributes to this mission:

- **Age Friendly Manitoba:** Once overseen by the Province, MASC now serves as the steward of Age Friendly Manitoba. This initiative strives to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for older adults by promoting the development of accessible, safe, and age-friendly communities. Age Friendly Manitoba collaborates with local municipalities, organizations, and communities to implement policies and infrastructure changes that enable seniors to live comfortably and engage fully in society. This includes enhancements in such areas as transportation, communications, housing, public spaces, and healthcare. By addressing the physical and social settings in which older adults reside, Age Friendly Manitoba ensures that aging individuals can remain active, engaged, and independent for as long as possible.
- **Member Organizations:** Membership in MASC was the foundation for our organization and continues to be an important focus in the work that we do. Community organizations can join MASC as members, gaining access to various benefits and supports. These community-based centers offer resources, services, and social opportunities for

older adults, featuring a range of programs from health and wellness activities to educational workshops and social events. By cultivating a sense of community and belonging, these organizations help seniors maintain their physical, mental, and social well-being, which are vital for healthy aging. They act as hubs of information and connection, ensuring that seniors can access the services they need to live independently and thrive. Acknowledging the importance of these organizations, MASC is committed to empowering and supporting them.

- **Social Prescribing:** This model of care encourages healthcare providers to refer patients to community resources that can enhance their well-being. Activities may include joining social groups, attending fitness classes, or volunteering. Social prescribing addresses the social determinants of health—such as isolation, lack of social connections, and mental health issues—that can impact older adults. By promoting these non-medical interventions, social prescribing empowers seniors to take charge of their health holistically, enhancing their quality of life and encouraging greater social engagement.

Each area strengthens the social fabric of communities. Member organizations are already hubs for social interaction, and when these centers are part of an Age Friendly community, they become even more inclusive and accessible. Social Prescribing encourages seniors to connect with others in their community, fostering relationships and reducing isolation. Together, these efforts create a stronger, more interconnected network where seniors feel supported and valued.

Collaboration is key to ensuring that older adults have everything they need to age healthily, independently, and with dignity.

Community Collaboration Grant Funding Fuels Innovation: Great Things are Happening!

In our previous newsletter, we revealed the twelve recipients of our latest Community Collaboration grant. Our consultants have been visiting these communities to make in-person check presentations and to connect with the individuals behind the projects. We believe it's important to highlight the incredible work these communities are doing and to extend our congratulations once again!

Continue reading to discover a few of the Age Friendly initiatives taking place in our Province...

Cycling Without Age in Brandon!



Brenda Tonn with Age Friendly Manitoba (centre), presents a certificate for \$10,000 to representatives of senior-friendly organizations in Brandon, a local business and the Riverbank Discovery Centre. From left, Grant Hamilton, Bike Brandon, Nancy McPherson, Age Friendly Brandon, Dan Robertson, Riverbank Discovery Centre board member, Dean Hammond, executive director, Riverbank Discovery Centre, Cam Wirch, A&L Cycle, and Eleysha Klaassen, executive director of Seniors for Seniors. (Michele McDougall/The Brandon Sun)

Age Friendly Brandon will be utilizing their grant to help seniors and those with mobility issues feel the joy of cycling without having to pedal themselves! This grant will be used to purchase a trishaw, which is a three-wheeled vehicle with electric assistance for one or two passengers. It is powered in part by a pedalling pilot. [To learn more, click here to read the Michele McDougall's Brandon Sun article.](#)

"Collaboration within a community transforms individual efforts into collective strength, fostering innovation, support, and shared growth."

Enhancing Transportation for Isolated Seniors in Stonewall/RM of Rockwood



Deborah Hildebrandt, Executive Director, South Interlake 55 Plus, Lauren Briggs, Vice-President, South Interlake 55 Plus, Corinna McMillan, Community Resource Coordinator, South Interlake Seniors Resource Council, Inc., Joie Van Dongen & Louise Hutton, AF Consultant.

The Town of Stonewall/RM of Rockwood Age-Friendly Committee Chairperson, Joie Van Dongen accepts the Age-Friendly Community Collaboration Grant cheque of \$9,000 for their project "Enhancing Transportation for Isolated Seniors" which will begin in January 2025. Collaborating partners in the project are: Age-Friendly Stonewall/RM of Rockwood, South Interlake 55 Plus, South Interlake Seniors Resource Council, Stonewall and Area Mobility Services, Nav-Care South West District Palliative Care and Town of Stonewall.

Elder Support in Portage la Prairie



Mayor Sharilyn Knox, PCRC ED Mari Kozar, Urban Indigenous Seniors Resource Coordinator Randy Lilley, AF Consultant Brenda Tonn, and City Manager Nathan Peto at City Hall

This grant is being used to support Indigenous seniors in the community. In collaboration with community organizations and youth such needs as food security, transportation, community involvement and intergenerational activities are being addressed. [To read the full Portage online article, click here.](#)



Our consultants are ready to work with you!

Connect with Connie Newman at (204) 792-5838 or info@manitobaseniorcommunities.ca and hello@agefriendlymanitoba.com or visit our website: www.agefriendlymanitoba.com



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