



March 2009
Issue 67

OCSCO Outreach

Ontario Society (Coalition) of Senior Citizens' Organizations

Mentoring Seniors' Organizations Through Capacity Building

The federal government recently announced grants for more than 800 projects for seniors' groups across the country under the New Horizons for Seniors Program. OCSCO is one of the seniors' organizations to receive funding for a project to mentor seniors' organizations through Capacity Building to take place in the Sudbury region.

It is hoped that this project will help establish a stronger presence for OCSCO in the north by building relationships and mentoring seniors' organizations in the Sudbury area on capacity building and by exploring possible joint projects in the future.

A workshop will be planned for the early fall with a focus on peer support. Other objectives for this forum include increasing knowledge and skills, as well as exchanging experiences in areas such as governance and funding structures, advocacy, communications, finance, volunteer development and fundraising.

The project's other element is to form a Social Issues Action Initiative, which means looking at the social issues affecting older adults in the region and working on solutions. This Initiative will involve seniors' groups in the south made up of OCSCO board members from the Toronto region and seniors' groups from Sudbury which will include the CAW Retirees.



Ron Michaud

OCSCO Board Member and Chair of the Sudbury Project Committee. Ron is also with the CAW Local 598

OCSCO, 660 Briar Hill Avenue, Suite 207, Toronto, ON, M6B 4B7

www.ocSCO.ca Email: OCSCO@web.net

Tel: (416) 785-8570, 1-800-265-0779 Fax: (416) 785-7361

How Age Friendly is Your Community?

It's no secret that the population is aging and each of us hopes that our aging experience is a positive one. Successful, healthy and active aging requires a combination of personal and environmental factors that work together to support the best possible experience.

To get people thinking about the environmental factors that support Healthy and Active Aging, the World Health Organization (WHO) in partnership with the Public Health Agency of Canada visited cities around the world and asked seniors – because seniors are the experts of their own lives - to identify what they thought was needed for cities to successfully support healthy aging. As a result, the Age Friendly Cities Guide was launched in 2007. Eight essential features make up the social, cultural and built environments that support healthy and active aging as seen in the Figure below.



What is very clear from the research is that the experience of aging will be quite different in every city, village or neighbourhood. The history, culture, geography, size

and even character of each community will mean a different set of opportunities – and barriers – for active and healthy aging.

What does this all mean for you?

The creation of an Age-Friendly Community requires coordinated community action. There is no one level of government responsible for creating such an environment and every community is unique. It is up to individual businesses, landowners, not-for-profit leaders, municipal leaders, health and community care workers, employers and individuals to make changes that will begin to create an age-friendly environment. First, though, they need to hear from seniors about the barriers they create and the more positive alternative.

Community leaders are needed with the passion to take on this worthwhile project. Initiatives have started in Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa, and Milton, to name a few. There are natural allies to be found among those advocating for vibrant, healthy, sustainable or walkable communities and for those providing and advocating for community, health, transportation and social services. Looking at such factors through the age-friendly lens links them together and provides the urgency associated with the coming demographic change. For more information you can visit the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat website at: www.ontarioseniors.ca

In the News

OCSCO supports measures to assist seniors in tough economic times

Back in January, OCSCO wrote to the Honourable James Flaherty, Minister of Finance regarding the budget and the then upcoming Stimulus Package stating we were in support of the following measures:

1. Making it a priority to address and nullify mandatory withdrawal requirements for RRIF's.
2. Spending on infrastructure which will support and include small business enterprises.
3. Amending the rules governing Employment Insurance to grant persons who must leave their employment to care for an older family member the same leave provisions now granted to new parents, and with the same guarantee that they can return to their positions of employment.
4. Amending the rules governing the Canada Pension Plan, to allow pension year credits for the year that individuals have left employment to care for older family members, in the same way that credits are given for caregivers of young children.
5. Strengthening the non-profit sector is critical to Canada's recovery—and it must play a significant part in the upcoming economic stimulus budget.

The full letter can be viewed on www.OCSCO.ca

The Law as it affects Older Adults

Does ageism affect the elderly when it comes to how they are treated under the law? Older adults make up a significant and growing proportion of our population, but do our laws reflect the needs

of an older population and circumstances of older adults? This project by the Law Commission of Ontario considered the relationship between laws and seniors and took issues related to aging into account.

It isn't just estate law, health care and end-of-life issues that come to mind when thinking of older adults and the law, but subjects like policies against older drivers or the recent removal of Ontario's mandatory retirement laws, among others. The aim of the project was to provide a basis on which any area of the law may be examined from an anti-ageist perspective.

The Report is Available online at:
www.lco-cdo.org

Ontario Health Coalition

In all Canadian provinces except Ontario, a problem with hospital administration can come under the scrutiny of the provincial ombudsman. However in Ontario freedom of information laws do not apply. Natalie Mehra of the Ontario Health Coalition wants changes saying that hospitals are important public services that need to be more accountable. During the 2006-2008 epidemic of C. Difficile, 450 patients in Ontario died but no government tally of the deaths was made nor was an official reporting system set in place. Ontario provinces are exempted from the freedom of information laws and have been for the past 20 years. Hospitals in the province receive \$18 billion in funding from provincial taxpayers.

Health Care Connect

This provincial government program refers people without a regular family health care provider to physicians and nurse practitioners who are accepting new patients in their community.

If you don't have a provider you can register for the Health Care Connect program by calling 1-800-445-1822.

Regional Geriatric Programs

Regional Geriatric Programs are specialized geriatric services covered by OHIP that assess and treat aspects of illness and disability in older adults 60+. The program is geared towards those individuals whose health and independence are at risk due to multiple and complex medical and psychosocial problems or a recent unexplained breakdown in health and or level of function, or at risk of losing the capacity for independent living. The services you are seeking will determine the referral process and they may require a referral from your doctor.

Services are only available in southern Ontario at present. To obtain more information on Regional Geriatric Programs for your area call the hospital referral number that corresponds with the region or community in which you live listed below:

- Hamilton 905 777-3837
- Kingston 613 548-7222
- Ottawa 613 761-4458
- Toronto 416 480-6026
- London 519 685-4046

or go to <http://rgps.on.ca/> to connect

Eating Well For Less

The current financial crisis could be a wake up call for eating local foods and reducing waste but you don't have to give up sound nutrition or taste. Recipes from the Great Depression era seem to be making a comeback and there are a number of web sites devoted to "depression era recipes", there is even an online cooking show called *Depression Cooking with Clara*. Clara is

a 93 year old grandmother and can be seen on YouTube.com

Beans are among the most inexpensive of foods and dried beans are especially nutritious. They offer good sources of fibre, iron, protein, B vitamins and folic acid. Here is a recent recipe tried by OCSCO staff.

Black Bean Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 pound black beans
- 1/3 bay leaf
- 1 large onion, sliced
- Salt to taste
- A few cloves of chopped garlic
- 1 tsp dry mustard powder
- 1 cup dry sherry

Instructions:

1. Pick over beans to remove any dirt, stones or foreign objects. Wash well, then soak for 8 hours in ample cold water.
2. Place beans and soaking liquid in a large saucepan with 1/3 bay leaf and bring to a boil over high heat. Skim off foam, lower heat, and simmer, partially covered, till beans are just tender, about 1 hour.
3. Add onion and continue to cook until onion melts into liquid, about 1 more hour.
4. Add salt to taste and garlic. Continue to cook, adding a little boiling water if necessary, until beans are very soft and start to melt into liquid, about 1-2 hours more.
5. Remove bay leaf and turn off heat. Ladle beans in batches into blender or food processor and puree or use an immersion blender and puree soup directly in the saucepan.
6. Add dry mustard powder and dry sherry. Correct seasoning. Reheat and serve, adding garnishes, such as slices of lemon or freshly chopped herbs.

OCSCO & Members Upcoming Events

- ♦ Ontario Gerontology Association's 28th Annual Conference - April 20 - May 1, 2009 in Toronto, for information call 416-535-6034
- ♦ Canadian Pensioners' Concerned - Annual General Meeting, April 20th, Toronto
- ♦ Lampton Community Fair, May 5 & 6, in Sarnia
- ♦ **June is Seniors' Month**
- ♦ Capacity Building Workshop -Sudbury - (date to be announced)

Remember if your group is planning an event we would like to hear about it!

MEMBERSHIP FORM

To become a member of OCSCO please complete the following:

Organization/Individual Name:	_____		
Contact Name:	_____		
Mailing Address:	_____		

City, Province:	_____	Postal Code:	_____
Telephone: (H)	_____	(W)	_____
Fax: (H)	_____	(W)	_____
Email:	_____	Website:	_____
Can we have a reciprocal linking arrangement for our website?	_____		
Membership Size:	_____	Date:	_____

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Voting Members: Seniors Organizations or division with:		
Under 100 Members	\$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
100 - 299 Members	\$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
300-1,000 Members	\$75.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over 1,000 Members	\$150.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Associate Members (Non-Voting):		
Under 100 Members	\$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
100 - 299 Members	\$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
300-1,000 Members	\$75.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over 1,000 Members	\$150.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual Members:		
Annual	\$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life Member	\$100.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

Membership Fee Enclosed (tax receipt available):\$ _____
Donation - Tax Receipt Available: \$ _____
Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____
Payment Method Cheque

Membership fees apply for the calendar year and are payable January 1. Please make your cheques payable to OCSCO and mail to:

OCSCO, 660 Briar Hill Avenue, Suite 207, Toronto, ON, M6B 4B7
Tel: (416) 785-8570, 1-800-265-0779 Fax: (416) 785-7361
Email: OCSCO@web.net www.ocSCO.ca