



Age- and Dementia-Friendly
**Community Pathway
Action Guide**
for Newfoundland and Labrador

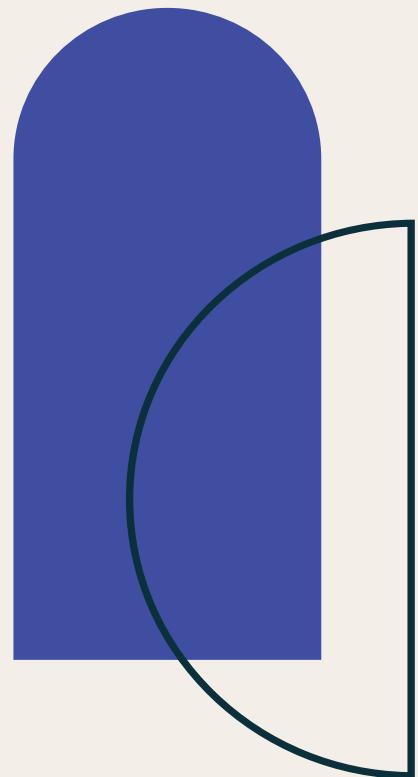
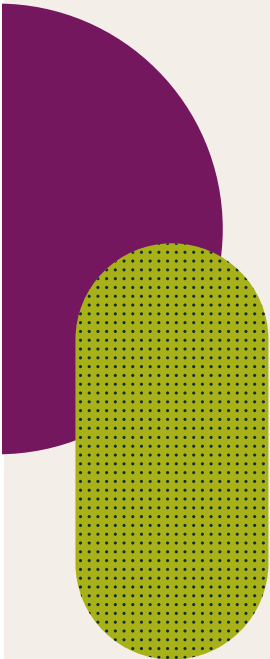
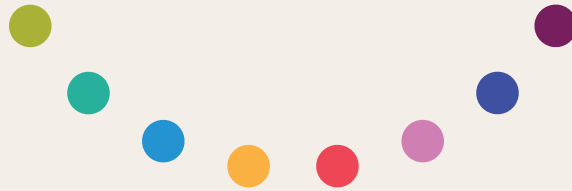


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About this Document

This action guide can be used to assist users (including town council members, community volunteers, not-for-profit organizations, planners, and health professionals) take action to make their communities more age- and dementia-inclusive. The document aims to:

- Build a common understanding of age- and dementia-friendly community concepts.
- Support meaningful conversations that engage individuals with lived experience, community members, and decision makers in identifying ways to make their communities more inclusive and socially connected.
- Plan effective actions to create age- and dementia-friendly communities.



What are Age- and Dementia-Friendly Communities?

Age-friendly communities are designed to enhance health and well-being for people of all ages and abilities. These communities support and enable people to age in the right place with dignity, respect, and independence, and to stay engaged in all areas of community life. An age-friendly community enables people of all backgrounds to actively participate and treats everyone with respect, regardless of age. Despite age being a protected characteristic, ageism is still prevalent nationally, and age friendly communities seek to challenge this.

Dementia-friendly communities are a natural extension of, and complement, age-friendly initiatives by adding depth with respect to the needs of people living with dementia. Dementia-friendly communities are committed to creating accessible, inclusive, and supportive spaces for people living with dementia and their caregivers. Community members share the responsibility for ensuring everyone, including anyone living with dementia, feels understood, valued, and able to contribute to the community. People living with dementia often live at home and are active, vibrant members of their communities. Age- and Dementia-Friendly communities are designed to help all residents live safely, enjoy good health, and stay involved and included.



Developing age- and dementia-friendly communities is a continuous and dynamic process which can include:

- Forming a committee to oversee the development of an age- and dementia-friendly plan. The committee should include representatives of partner organizations, older adults, people living with dementia and their caregivers, and other interested members of the community. Minority groups should also be represented.
- Adopting a municipal resolution to actively support, promote and work toward becoming age- and dementia-friendly.
- Identifying and partnering with collaborators and interest holders.
- Engaging community members to determine strengths, needs, and priorities through a needs assessment.
- Creating a community plan based on a needs assessment which can include building on, or improving, existing structures to make them more age- and dementia-friendly.
- Communicating plans and progress to people living with dementia and their caregivers, older adults, community members, and key partners regularly.
- Monitoring and evaluating the plan to make revisions as needed.

How can my community become more Age- and Dementia-Friendly?

People lie at the heart of what it means to be age- and dementia-friendly. Age- and dementia-friendly communities consider, from the viewpoint of seniors and people living with dementia, if existing community features are empowering, inclusive, and supportive. Community planning processes are key to developing an age- and dementia-inclusive society. For successful planning, it is crucial to collaborate with professionals with expertise in healthy aging, inclusion, and dementia. To create an age- and dementia-friendly community, actions across several sectors can be considered to meet the needs of seniors and people living with dementia. To maintain resource efficiency, communities can build on their existing strengths and assets by starting with action areas that already contain elements of age- and dementia- inclusiveness.

Age- and Dementia-Friendly Action Areas

Transportation including public transit stations, stops, and vehicles such as buses, ferries, and taxis. Safe, convenient, accessible, and inclusive public transport enables seniors and people living with dementia, especially those who do not drive, to travel and access their community. Public transport is important for independence, participation, and engagement. Accessible, safe, and inclusive public transport also incorporates considerations for accompanying families, and caregivers. Good transport options benefit not only those directly users but also families and caregivers.

Housing options for seniors and people living with dementia, including private homes, social housing, government-supported accommodations, and long-term care homes, should be accessible, inclusive, and non-discriminatory. Many older adults prefer to remain in their homes or communities, which can be supported by homes designed for aging in place and communities offering diverse housing options for various incomes and life stages.

Outdoor spaces and buildings including streets, parks, sidewalks, recreation centres, workplaces, hospitals, banks, and local businesses. In an age- and dementia-friendly community, these spaces are accessible, safe, and easy to navigate to ensure involvement, participation, and engagement for seniors and people living with dementia. They have wayfinding and accessibility strategies including clear signage, ample rest areas, accessible structural elements (e.g. ramps, handrails) and sensory elements (e.g. adequate lighting, low background noise) to ensure people of all ages can access their community and engage safely. Accessible, safe, and inclusive outdoor spaces and buildings also incorporate considerations for accompanying families, and caregivers.

Social participation including leisure, recreation, and activities that provide opportunities to develop new social networks and maintain existing ones. Loneliness can be as harmful to health as chronic illness, affecting individuals of all ages. Socializing and engaging in accessible, affordable activities can help combat isolation. In age- and dementia-friendly communities, significant and meaningful activities, specifically designed for seniors and people living with dementia, are developed, and maintained, with recognition of how other activities can be adjusted to support the unique needs of community members. Services such as libraries, museums, theatres, music, and recreation centres provide opportunities for seniors and people living with dementia to remain active and engaged in their communities. Participation in leisure, cultural, and spiritual activities foster health, belonging, and strong relationships. An age- and dementia-friendly community aims to ensure that these activities are financially, culturally, and physically accessible to all.

Communication and information aimed to address stigma around aging and dementia and keep older adults aware of available programs and services in the community. Stigma around aging and dementia informs harmful stereotypes that focus on deficits rather than recognizing the abilities and skills of these individuals. Age- and dementia-friendly communities recognize that information needs to be shared through a variety of methods since not everyone has computer skills or access to the internet. Age- and dementia-friendly communities provide timely and accessible information using familiar channels to all community members.

Civic participation and employment aimed to support seniors and people living with dementia to contribute to society, community, and family. Employment can be a central part of a person's life satisfaction. As far as possible, seniors and people living with dementia should be supported to continue to work for as long as they choose and are able. Age- and dementia-friendly communities foster respectful workplaces designed to support the diverse perspectives, needs, and skills of seniors and people living with dementia. There can be opportunities for seniors and people living with dementia to engage in lifelong learning to achieve their potential. Age- and dementia-friendly communities aim to offer quality options for older individuals to contribute through paid employment or volunteer work and engage in democracy. Meaningful volunteering positively impacts mental health, while paid work benefits well-being and finances. However, such opportunities often decrease with age.

Communities have a role to play in encouraging older adults and people living with dementia to participate in the political process. Individuals can be provided with opportunity to voice their concerns and views to government officials or participate in advocacy groups. Seniors and people living with dementia must be involved in decision-making on issues that may impact them.

Community support and health services that are inclusive of seniors and people living with dementia, recognizing their diverse health care needs and preferences. Communities can offer supports to individuals to help them remain at home for as long as possible such as snow clearing, grocery and meal delivery services. A range of health services along the continuum of care, including preventive care, geriatric care, hospitals, rehabilitation, personal care homes, long-term care homes, home care, and palliative and end of life care, can be designed to be age- and dementia-friendly. These services should be easily accessible at locations convenient for seniors to reach. Support to navigate the health system and available health services would raise awareness among seniors of what is available to them.

Respect and social inclusion aimed at recognizing seniors are an asset to their community and can continue to contribute after retirement or a dementia diagnosis. Community, voluntary, faith groups, and organizations can engage and enable seniors to volunteer their skills, time, and voice to causes meaningful to them.

Intergenerational programming, connecting seniors, people living with dementia, with all community members can have positive outcomes for everyone involved. Intergenerational gatherings and activities are a great way for young and older people to learn from one another, honor what each has to offer and, feel good about themselves. Increasing education decreases stigma, so it is important that community members understand dementia and are aware that people living with dementia can sometimes experience the world differently. Seniors and people living with dementia and their caregivers should always be consulted on decisions concerning them.

Public safety aimed at creating and maintaining the safest possible community for seniors, people living with dementia, and their caregivers. Age- and dementia-friendly communities develop fire and emergency management plans that include considerations for seniors who live alone and people living with dementia. These plans address the safety and protection of seniors and people living with dementia under emergency situations in the community.

First responders should be trained on engaging and communicating with people living with dementia.

Supporting families and caregivers through activities that assist older adults and people living with dementia, while also addressing caregivers' personal circumstances and the demands of their role. Age- and dementia-friendly communities offer families and caregivers health and educational resources, support groups, and opportunities for rest and respite.

Examples of Age- and Dementia-Friendly Community Actions

Age-friendly actions will benefit all members of the community. Dementia-friendly actions are a natural extension that allow people living with dementia and their caregivers to be included in community life. Actions can be adapted to be accessible, equitable, and culturally inclusive of all community members (funding opportunities are listed on page 18).

Table 1. Age- and Dementia-Friendly Community Actions adapted from Dementia Friendly America

Transportation	
Age-Friendly	Dementia-Friendly
▪ Ensure individual and group public transportation options are available including voluntary transportation, public transportation, commercial (taxi), and specialized transportation for people with disabilities. ▪ Ensure drivers are helpful and courteous. ▪ Provide affordable public transportation that is reliable and has frequent services. ▪ Ensure stops and stations are well lit, accessible, safe, and clean with adequate seating and shelter. ▪ Provide priority parking and drop-off spots for people with disabilities. ▪ Provide voluntary transportation service where public transportation is not available. ▪ Ensure roads are well maintained and well lit. ▪ Regulate traffic flow. ▪ Develop active transportation routes that are safe, well-maintained, and have clear signage.	▪ Ensure staff are available to help passengers living with dementia use public transit. ▪ Provide training to drivers so they understand how to help riders living with dementia. ▪ Offer transportation services that do not require passengers to handle money. Allow companions travel for free. ▪ Ensure dementia-friendly transportation services are well advertised. ▪ Provide schedule reminders and help at destinations.

Housing

Age-Friendly

- Ensure safe, affordable housing and essential services are available to seniors and people with disabilities.
- Develop housing areas close to amenities.
- Ensure home modifications are available from providers who understand the needs of seniors, e.g., grab bars in bathrooms, handrails for stairs.
- Provide affordable services to enable seniors to age at home.
- Ensure public and rental housing is safe, clean, well maintained, and incorporates age-friendly home design and modifications.

Dementia-Friendly

- Ensure a range of housing options are available for people living with dementia offering various levels of support.
- Provide best practice training for dementia care to staff in personal care and long-term care homes.
- Use sound absorbing materials to decrease background noise.
- Incorporate dementia-friendly home design and modifications.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Age-Friendly

- Ensure communities are clean and pleasant.
- Ensure green spaces are available, well maintained, and safe.
- Provide places to sit and rest both inside buildings and outdoors.
- Ensure roads are safe for pedestrians to cross.
- Provide accessible public washrooms that are clean, with clear signage.
- Ensure sidewalks are wide enough for wheelchairs, well lit, well maintained, non-slip, and separate from cycling paths.
- Ensure buildings have accessible elevators, ramps, railings, stairs, and non-slip floors.

Dementia-Friendly

- Ensure street clutter is minimal without excessive signage and advertisements.
- Ensure communities are easy to navigate and include landmarks to aid wayfinding.
- Minimize background noise with acoustic barriers such as grass.
- Provide clear signage at key decision points, preferably with dark lettering on a light background.
- Design entrances to places and buildings that are clearly visible and obvious.
- Ensure street furniture is available in styles familiar to older people.

Social Participation

Age-Friendly

- Offer a variety of activities that appeal to the diverse interests of seniors are offered.
- Ensure events are held at times and places that are convenient and accessible to seniors.
- Communicate activities to seniors with outreach to people at risk of social isolation.
- Partner with schools to provide opportunities to learn about aging and include seniors in school activities.

Dementia-Friendly

- Design activities to support the needs of people living with dementia and their caregivers.
- Ensure community organizations are aware of the needs of families living with dementia.

Communication and Information

Age-Friendly

- Provide information to seniors in accessible formats they prefer.
- Provide accessible communication to seniors who are deaf, hard of hearing, low vision, blind and seniors who have communication disabilities.
- Provide ways for seniors to stay connected to news, community events, and activities.
- Provide public access computers and the internet in public spaces such as libraries.

Dementia-Friendly

- Share information about dementia to reduce stigma.
- Provide information about dementia and supports and services to families and caregivers.
- Partner with the Alzheimer Society to deliver dementia-friendly training to staff at consumer-facing organizations and businesses to learn how to communicate and serve people living with dementia.

Civic Participation and Employment

Age-Friendly

- Ensure seniors have a range of employment options available to them.
- Adapt workplaces to meet the needs of people with disabilities.
- Offer a wide range of volunteer options.
- Offer post-retirement training to seniors.

Dementia-Friendly

- Adapt workplaces to meet the needs of people living with dementia.
- Provide volunteer and paid employment options to people living with dementia.
- Provide educational opportunities for people living with dementia.

Community Support and Health Services

Age-Friendly

- Ensure all staff are respectful and understand the needs of seniors.
- Offer an adequate range of health and community supports.
- Coordinate health and community services so they are easy to navigate.
- Offer physical activity programs to seniors.
- Offer services to support advance care planning and legal services for seniors.

Dementia-Friendly

- Provide education, counseling, and support to people living with dementia and their caregivers.
- Offer grocery delivery programs.
- Offer physical activity programs, adapted to all ability levels, to people living with dementia.
- Offer dementia supports such as memory cafés to people living with dementia and their caregivers.
- Support local banks to offer financial guidance to people living with dementia and their families.
- Offer dementia-friendly training to businesses to support people living with dementia.
- Offer advance care planning, legal, and financial services with specialized knowledge of the needs of people living with dementia.

Respect and Social Inclusion

Age-Friendly

- Ensure seniors are valued and respected by the community.
- Ensure seniors are included as partners in decisions that affect them.
- Offer intergenerational programs.
- Invite seniors to be involved in planning community events.

Dementia-Friendly

- Ensure people living with dementia are valued and respected by the community.
- Ensure people living with dementia and their caregivers are supported and given information to help inform decisions.
- Invite people living with dementia and their caregivers to participate in community events. Adapt these events to be inclusive of the needs of people living with dementia and their caregivers.

Public Safety

Age-Friendly

- Include consideration of seniors with various needs in community emergency plans.
- Ensure emergency plans consider support for seniors who live alone, and people living with disabilities who may require help in the event of a disaster.

Dementia-Friendly

- Ensure emergency plans consider the safety, security, and needs of people living with dementia.
- Include people living with dementia and their caregivers in the development of local emergency plans.
- Provide dementia-friendly training to first responders.
- Ensure emergency plans include a registry of people who will need help in the event of a disaster.

Supporting Families and Caregivers

Age-Friendly

- Include seniors in community events for families.
- Include considerations for accompanying families in community infrastructure, events, and plans.

Dementia-Friendly

- Include considerations for accompanying families, and caregivers in community infrastructure, events, and plans.
- Offer respite options to caregivers.
- Offer support groups for families and caregivers.

Role of Municipal Government

Communities play a significant role in supporting people to live longer healthier lives while fostering fair and sustainable societies. Municipalities can often address factors that improve health in a nimble and focused manner.

Municipalities can leverage policies and legislation to support age- and dementia-friendly communities including:

Accessibility Act

www.gov.nl.ca/sswb/accessibility-act/

Adult Protection Act

www.gov.nl.ca/seniors/apa

Emergency Services Act

www.gov.nl.ca/jps/fes/emo/municipalplanning/

Public Health Protection and Promotion Act

www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/p37-3.htm

Towns and Local Service Districts Act

www.assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/t06-2.htm

Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000

www.gov.nl.ca/mca/land-use-planning/

Resources

Age Friendly Canada

www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/aging-seniors/friendly-communities.html

Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Communities Program

www.gov.nl.ca/seniors/grants/age-friendly

Arts and Aging Network

www.artsandaging.com

Alzheimer Society of Newfoundland and Labrador

alzheimer.ca/nl/en

Coalition of Persons with Disabilities Newfoundland and Labrador

codnl.ca

Dementia Friendly Canada

alzheimer.ca/en/get-involved/become-dementia-friendly

Dementia-Friendly Communities | Well-Being NL

dementiafriendlynl.ca

Healthy Built Environment Linkages Toolkit

www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/professional-resources/healthy-built-environment-linkages-toolkit

Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Professional Planners

atlanticplanners.org/provincial-associations/newfoundland-and-labrador

Recreation NL

recreationnl.com

Regional Wellness Coalitions

www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/healthyliving/wellnesscoalitions

Seniors NL

www.seniorsnl.ca

Universal Design

universaldesignnl.ca

Funding Opportunities

Accessible Taxi and Busing Grant

www.gov.nl.ca/sswb/disabilities/accessible-taxi-program

Accessibility Grant

www.gov.nl.ca/sswb/accessibility-grant

Active NL

www.gov.nl.ca/tcar/funding-programs/active-nl

Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Communities Program

www.gov.nl.ca/seniors/grants/age-friendly

Canada Community Building Fund

www.gov.nl.ca/mca/for/gta

Canada Public Transit Fund

housing-infrastructure.canada.ca/cptf-ftcc/index-eng.html

Newfoundland and Labrador Community Transportation Program

www.gov.nl.ca/sswb/grants/nl-transportation

Newfoundland and Labrador Seniors' Social Inclusion Initiative

www.gov.nl.ca/seniors/grants/seniors-social-inclusion

Regional Wellness Coalitions

www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/healthyliving/wellnesscoalitions

