

Age-Friendly Communities: Creating a Custom Needs Assessment

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Presenters:

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Session Overview



- Overview of Step 2: Creating a Custom Needs Assessment
- The Waterloo Experience

Step 2: Creating a Custom Needs Assessment


Objectives

- Collect more detailed information about age-friendly priorities in your community
- Identify your community's person-environment (p-e) fit

Key skills

- Experience conducting a community needs assessment
- Basic proficiency with spreadsheet software
- Basic data analysis skills

Key tasks

- Examine your tool set
 - Create a draft list of questions
 - Create person-environment question pairs
 - Finalize the needs assessment
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Waterloo's AFC Process: Conducting a Needs Assessment



Arlene Groh RN BA, Chair
Dr. John Lewis, University of Waterloo



Background

Project Timeline...

2009

- World Congress of Gerontology, Paris
- Question: could policies affecting older people result in conditions that decrease the risk of ageist behaviour and elder abuse?
- Establishment of a City of Waterloo Mayor's Age-Friendly Advisory Committee, first Mayor's Forum

2010

- January 27, World Café
- June 10, Mayor's Advisory Committee Dialogue Event
- July 2010, The 'People's Survey'

2011

- Waterloo admitted to the WHO's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities

Action Plan

2013

- Mayor's Report and Action Plan presented to Council
- <http://www.waterloo.ca/agefriendly>

Key Findings

- Waterloo is highly valued by its older residents.
- The City and Region of Waterloo needs to address its stock of affordable housing.
- The City needs to improve opportunities for older adult social participation and intergenerational engagement.
- Personal mobility is critical to maintaining older adult independence.
- Walkability is largely a behavioural rather than a physical issue.

More Detail

Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in International Comparison
T. Moolaert, S. Garon (Eds.)

Needs Assessment: WHO Survey

Baseline Assessment



AGE FRIENDLY WATERLOO: THE PEOPLE'S SURVEY

The *Mayors Advisory Committee for City of Waterloo Age Friendly City* is looking for your feedback on a range of city features that are essential to creating an age friendly city, in which people of all ages have a high quality of life. Your feedback will assist the City in identifying its strengths, targeting its weaknesses, and establishing a benchmark to measure our progress as we work together towards becoming the most age friendly Waterloo that we can be!

Rating System:
 5 = Excellent! We're Doing Great!
 4 = Very Good
 3 = Good, But Could Do Better
 2 = Fair, Needs Attention
 1 = Poor, Needs Major Improvements
 0 = I Don't Know

This survey uses 8 'age-friendly city' categories that were developed through consultation with older people in 33 cities and 22 countries for the *WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (WHO) Age-Friendly Cities* project.

How would you rate the following features of Waterloo?

Excellent
 Very Good
 Good
 Fair
 Poor
 I Don't Know

OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	I Don't Know
Public Areas - clean and pleasant	5	4	3	2	1	0
Green Spaces – sufficient in number, well maintained, safe	5	4	3	2	1	0
Outdoor Seating - sufficient in number, in good locations	5	4	3	2	1	0
Pavement –wide enough for wheelchairs, well maintained, have drop curbs	5	4	3	2	1	0
Pedestrian Crossings – well designed, safe for people with different disabilities	5	4	3	2	1	0
Drivers – respectful of pedestrians at intersections and crossings	5	4	3	2	1	0
Cycle Paths – well separated from pedestrians and vehicles	5	4	3	2	1	0
Outdoor Lighting – good locations, bright	5	4	3	2	1	0
Public Buildings – well-signed, accessible and safe	5	4	3	2	1	0
Public Toilets / Change Rooms - good locations, clean, accessible	5	4	3	2	1	0

TRANSPORTATION

Public Transit - reliable and frequent	5	4	3	2	1	0
Public Transit Costs – affordable	5	4	3	2	1	0
Transit Network – access to many areas of the city, good connections and well-marked routes and vehicles	5	4	3	2	1	0
Transit Vehicles – clean, accessible, not over-crowded, priority seating respected	5	4	3	2	1	0
Specialized Transportation – available for disabled people	5	4	3	2	1	0
Drivers – are respectful, stop when required, assist with boarding and departing	5	4	3	2	1	0
Transit Stops – adequate seating and shelter, well placed, clean	5	4	3	2	1	0
Information on Routes/Schedules - complete and accessible	5	4	3	2	1	0
Voluntary Transport Service – available where public transit is too limited	5	4	3	2	1	0
Roads – well-maintained, covered drains, good lighting	5	4	3	2	1	0
Traffic Signs – visible and well placed	5	4	3	2	1	0
General Parking and Drop off areas – safe, well placed, conveniently located	5	4	3	2	1	0
Priority Parking and Drop off areas – available for people with special needs	5	4	3	2	1	0

HOUSING

Affordable Housing - sufficient, affordable, safe, close to other services	5	4	3	2	1	0
Please indicate the cost which has largest impact on housing affordability:	Municipal Property Taxes	Mortgage Payments or Rent	Maintenance Costs	Other:		
Specialized Affordable Housing – available for frail / disabled older people	5	4	3	2	1	0
Home Maintenance and Support Services – sufficient, affordable, available	5	4	3	2	1	0
Housing Construction – good quality, safe, comfortable	5	4	3	2	1	0
Interior Spaces - level surfaces, allows freedom of movement	5	4	3	2	1	0
Home Modification - options and supplies are available and affordable	5	4	3	2	1	0
Rental Housing – clean, affordable, available and well-maintained	5	4	3	2	1	0

Comments: For housing categories which scored a 1 or 2, please elaborate on your reasoning:

Needs Assessment: University of Waterloo Research

Focused Assessment

2010

- 76 participants interviewed by UW researchers
 - Cross section of Waterloo neighbourhoods,
 - Older adults living independently and retirement residences,
 - Older adult service organizations and committees.

Research Question

- *What are the challenges associated with aging in the City of Waterloo?*

Question Sources

- WHO Checklist
- Vital Communities Toolkit
- Michigan, Elder Friendly Community Assessment
- Age-Friendly Hamilton Questionnaire
- Cleveland Guide to Elder Friendly Community Building
- Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults
- Livable Communities: An Evaluation Guide (AARP)...

Needs Assessment: University of Waterloo Research

Rationale


- Each survey has different areas of strength and focus – e.g. AARP, Housing
- Some surveys are focused on Quality of Life (QoL) questions.
 - Person Centred, Subjective: e.g. How safe do older adults in the community feel?
- Other surveys are focused on assessing physical and social infrastructure.
 - Environment Centred, Objective: Does your community have a dial-a-ride service?
- There are several surveys/questionnaires available from different organizations:
 - Capitalize on what's available – i.e. 'low hanging fruit'
 - Opportunity to developed more nuanced surveys
 - Reflect a balance of person and environment questions,
 - Capture local priorities/concerns.

How Does it Work?

Step 1: Examine the Tool Sets

- Select a 'cross section' of surveys.
- What AFC dimensions did your community identify as priorities for meeting the goals of your initiative? What dimensions are lower priorities?
- Are there dimensions that do not apply to your community?
- Expand your review of other tool sets to fill in any gaps.

Step 2: Create a Draft List of Questions

- Select relevant questions that match your community's priorities.
 - Age-friendliness is about the relationship or 'fit' between people and their environment – ensure that you have questions about both.
 - Health – ensure that you have a balance of questions about mental and physical health.
 - Survey/questionnaire length is a function of how you intend to present the questions.
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How Does it Work?

Step 3: Create Person-Environment Question Pairs

- An effective needs assessment will identify the **gaps** between:
 - A community's resources or its *environment*, and
 - The needs, preferences and abilities of older *people*.

People-Centred Questions

How much do feelings of anxiety stand in the way of doing the things you want to do?



Do you have difficulties getting around in the winter because sidewalks have not been cleared of snow?



Environment-Centred Questions

Is there a program in your community designed to help older adults cope with feelings of anxiety that might be unique to an older adult?



Does the community have a regulation about snow removal from the sidewalks?



How Does it Work?

Step 4: Evaluate Your Survey/Questionnaire

- **PRETEST!**

Reflections

- The method can be time consuming...
- ...however, it provides a good representation of what people in a community need and the services, programs, infrastructure available to address those needs.
- Amenable to delivery as a paper survey, or as questions delivered in one-on-one interviews or larger focus groups.
- Limited reach.
- Participants often wish to talk about issues related to specific locales/places...
 - ...hard to document spatial/geographic information.

Digital Tools: My Community Vision

- Video 1



Digital Tools: My Community Vision

- Video 2

Step 2 How-To Plain Language Summaries

- How to review data collection tools
- How to create a draft list of questions
- How to create person/environment question pairs
- How to finalize the needs assessment

Additional Resources

- AFC Website – For how-to summaries, additional resources and information on past and future webinar opportunities
 - www.agefriendlyontario.ca
 - www.collectivitesamiesdesainesontario.ca

Thank you!

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**Next webinar “Developing an Action Plan”
(January 21st, 2016 @ 1:00 PM)**