SENIORS HOUSING LAB

Insights Report – Workshop 4
August 4, 2020

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The Seniors Housing Lab was initiated and is supported by the partners below, and made possible by funding from the National Housing Strategy under the NHS Solutions Lab.

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Recognition

We are grateful for the seniors/elders with lived experience who are taking their personal time to guide us in this work.

We also recognize these organizations for their commitment to work together over the 8 months of the project:

411 Seniors Centre Society
Advent Real Estate Services Ltd.
Amacon
Atira Women's Resource Society
BC Housing
BC Non-profit Housing Association
Brightside Community Homes Foundation
Burnaby Community Services
Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Carnegie Community Centre, City of Vancouver
City of New Westminster
City of Richmond
City of Vancouver
Fraser Health Authority
Gerontology Research Centre, Simon Fraser University
Hollyburn Family Services
Homelessness Services Association of BC
Jewish Family Services
LandlordBC

Lookout Health and Housing Society
Math Mountain
MOSAIC
Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House
Network of Inner City Community Services Society (NICCSS)
New Chelsea Society
Private-sector landlord
Reach Community Health Centre
Renfrew Collingwood Seniors Society
Seniors Services Society (SSS) of BC
RADIUS SFU
SHARE Family and Community Services
Silver Harbour Seniors' Activity Centre
The Bloom Group
The New Vista Society
United Way of the Lower Mainland
Vancouver Coastal Health
West End Seniors' Network
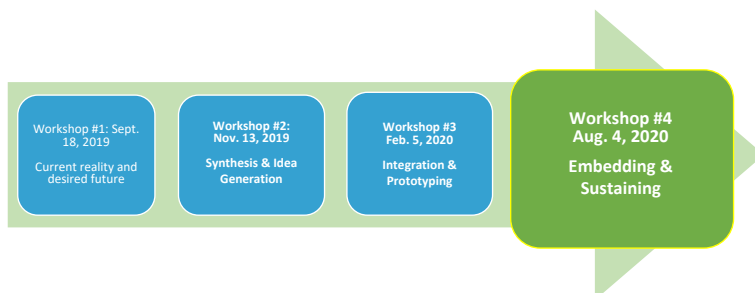Whole Way House Society

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Challenge Statement

What might enable low-income senior renters in multi-unit buildings to retain their housing, age in the right place and thrive?

Income Supports?

Access to Support Services?

Accessible & Affordable Housing?

Social Connections & Programs?

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Project progress

| Workshop #1: Sept. 18, 2019

Current reality and desired future | Workshop #2: Nov. 13, 2019

Synthesis & Idea Generation | Workshop #3 Feb. 5, 2020

Integration & Prototyping | Workshop #4 Aug. 4, 2020

Embedding & Sustaining |

Workshop 1: Participants became aware of the breadth of knowledge, experience and passion for the issue, which provided a strong foundation to delve deeper into our various perspectives on seniors housing stability in Metro Vancouver. We explored visions for a desired future for senior renters, and considered key themes related to our Challenge Statement.

Workshop 2: Participants identified problem spaces and formed six "working groups" to brainstorm and develop possible solutions, and built skills and tools to test ideas with the community.

Workshop 3: Participants drew on interviews and coaching to narrow their focus to a few strong ideas. Each working group developed a prototype to represent their idea and then pitched their idea to the other groups for feedback to deepen and refine their innovation.

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Welcome, Introductions and Framing

The fourth and final SHL workshop was held August 4, 2020. Due to COVID-19 pandemic protocols, the workshop was shortened to 2.5 hours and conducted virtually, using Zoom

In total, 22 people participated, including 2 seniors/elders.

The workshop was designed and facilitated by a project team: Annelies Tjebbes (RADIUS SFU), Stephen D'Souza (Homelessness Services Association of BC) and Mariam Larson (Lab Manager), with technical support from Kate Nickelchok (RADIUS SFU).

Mariam Larson welcomed participants and reflected on the impact of COVID-19 on our communities, partners and older adults and elders who are experiencing housing challenges. Annelies Tjebbes acknowledged our work takes place on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.

Workshop 4 Objectives
- Progress top solutions to be implemented
- Ensure senior voices are being centered/represented
- Plan for sharing ideas at the HOME Symposium

Workshop 4 Agenda
- Progress Ideas: Explore key questions
- Share Back / Pitches
- Next Steps

Participants were reminded of our Community Agreements as a tool to guide our thinking, responses, and behaviours. These agreements can help produce an environment that enables collaborative and innovative idea formation to flourish.

Community Agreements
- Stay curious / Learner mindset
- Share the space
- Be present
- Confidentiality
- Speak personally
- Collaboration > Competition
- Patient Urgency
- Generative / Supportive Energy

Workshop 3 activities resulted in participants' focusing on five ideas. However, COVID-19 impacted organizational capacity and resources across the region. Working groups suspended activity from March until May, when the SHL Advisory Committee was able to plan and facilitate a return to SHL work.

Interviews with 25 participants and working group coaching between Workshops 3 and 4 resulted in one idea being suspended due to limited capacity. Three groups combined forces into one idea, and one group more clearly articulating a systemic approach to the challenge. This resulted in a focus on progressing two key ideas.

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Progress ideas
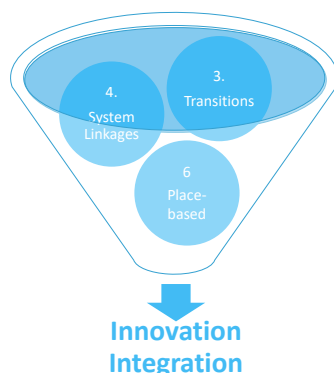
Working Groups 3, 4 & 6: "Seniors CONNECT In-Place"
Transitions
How might we collaborate to improve transitions between service for the long-term goal of achieving aging in place?

How might we move health and community to a common understanding and action to achieve person-centred, long-term aging in place with smooth trusting relationships?

System Linkages
How might we connect tenants with/to supports before crisis occurs and create more stable, accessible system linkages between services and tenants?

Place-based
How might we embed place-based programming and service navigation into all multi-unit buildings with a high proportion of seniors (inclusive of other seniors in the neighbourhood)?

Working Group 5: Senior-led System Redesign
How might we give voice to diverse groups of seniors in order to redesign the system that:
- *is both respectful and responds to the urgency of the current situation;*
- *builds on what currently works; and*
- *engages a broad range of stakeholders including landlords?*

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Progress ideas: Breakout and pitch

Participants formed virtual breakout groups to progress the two ideas. They considered:
- What barriers are you/will you face?
- How has your idea evolved as a result of COVID-19?
- What would it look like to implement and how will you progress to that stage?
- How will you center the voice of seniors in your design?
- How will you share your work at the HOME Symposium?
- How does this work tie back to the question around supporting seniors to age in the right place and thrive?

Groups developed a pitch and shared feedback across groups to strengthen their ideas and next steps.

Full group discussion how COVID-19 highlighted the importance of:
- Language barriers
- Food insecurity
- Lack of social supports
- Inadequate financial resources
- Transparency across sector stakeholders

Senior-led System Redesign group discussed:
- How COVID-19 highlighted challenges for healthy aging-in-place, especially in seniors' residences
- Need for secure, supportive housing for low-income seniors
- Formation of a Senior Tenants' Advisory
- Opportunities to participate in review of SAFER and other consultations on service needs

Seniors CONNECT Timeline "Jamboard"
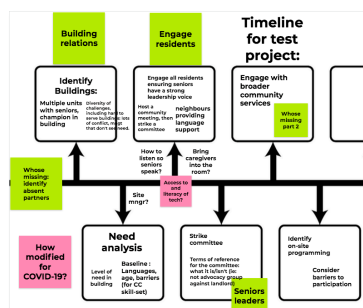
Seniors CONNECT In-Place group discussed:
- How can we keep seniors at the centre of the circle of care?
- Where should a circle coordinator be located?
- Coordination involves two areas of expertise: Resource knowledge and management and planning expertise.
- How can language support be built into services?
- Recognize the goal is not to restrict activities to a particular site as this can contribute to isolation.
- What would a pilot phase look like?
- Consider starting by asking a community committee of residents about their needs and who are their champions?

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Feedback

Participants completed 9 evaluation forms, reflecting on their experiences and learning through SHL Workshops. Overall, participants reported increased understanding of issues and sector connections and a commitment to continue collaboration on seniors housing stability.

Constructive feedback included:
- "It would be helpful for future labs to have some budget in their funding stream to help implement or pilot test some of the innovative ideas…"
- "It wasn't as 'outside of the box' as I was hoping for."
- "It was a challenge to make it to all meetings, which led to some confusion about next steps. COVID-19 made it more challenging…"
- "We as a group must take into consideration the impacts of COVID—funding resources, impacts on socialization on seniors—and be open to amalgamating/interlocking a number of existing programs/services… into manageable and cohesive positive outcomes for seniors."

Full evaluation report is available on request.

Highlights included:
"Meeting the cross-section of people from different sectors but with the same goal to help low income renters."

"Getting to meet others who were equally as passionate about dignified seniors housing and supports.… I particularly liked the activity of pitching to different groups and receiving feedback."

"Clarification of the most pressing needs…"

"Consensus around key issues."

What did SHL help achieve?
"SHL has [put] the topic 'on the table', constructive and lively discussion and thought-provoking possibilities and challenges, even with COVID…"

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Next Steps

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SHL will host a virtual HOME Symposium on Oct. 21, 2020. The event will focus on moving the two ideas forward.

SHL leaders will work with both groups to refine ideas and develop compelling presentations for a broad group of stakeholders to increase integration, interaction, and engagement to work differently to help senior renters retain their housing, age in the right place, and thrive.

Registration will open mid-September.

For more information, contact
Mariam Larson, SHL Lab Manager
mariaml@seniorsservicessociety.ca

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