

# *Age-Friendly Communities in Manitoba*

*Summary of Survey Findings -  
Cartwright Flu Clinic*

December, 2008

Centre on Aging  
University of Manitoba

## Executive Summary

As part of a flu clinic held in Cartwright in November 2008, individuals were asked to complete a brief questionnaire designed to collect information on the age-friendliness of their community. A total of 48 questionnaires were completed; 36 individuals identified Cartwright as their community of residence. This report summarizes the findings from the 36 individuals who completed the Age-Friendly Communities Survey; 64% identified themselves as a senior. The survey identified the most age-friendly aspects, the least age-friendly aspects and priorities that can be considered for an age-friendly action plan for Cartwright, Manitoba.

Worthy of celebration as the most **age-friendly aspects** is the safety and respect felt by the seniors living in Cartwright. Information about community events, services and programs is readily available, and seniors can attend these through available and affordable transportation services, such as the Handi-Van. Affordable housing, meal delivery services and planning processes considering the needs of seniors were also rated as highly positive.

Some outdoor spaces and buildings and access to medical services were noted as the **least age-friendly aspects**. Areas for improvement for getting around Cartwright included the ongoing maintenance of sidewalks such as repairing uneven surfaces. Clearing of snow for walking and access into buildings could be completed in a timelier manner so people can move about safely. Access to buildings for those using wheelchairs, scooters and walkers could be improved by the addition of ramps or automatic opening doors. Wheelchair accessibility to public washrooms, especially in businesses, would also be appreciated. The lack of health care services for seniors in Cartwright and transportation to health services outside the community were not readily available. Another area for improvement included the offering of a wider range of activities specific to seniors such as exercise classes, computer use, and intergenerational programs with children, for example, reading programs in schools. Also noted was a lack of paid working opportunities for seniors.

### Individual Priority Choices

Individuals had the opportunity to list issues they felt needed to be urgently addressed. The first priority was the improvement of accessibility to buildings and washrooms. Second was the adding and maintenance of paved sidewalks as well as clearing snow from sidewalks and approaches. The third priority was in the area of civic participation and social inclusion for improved communication and integration between seniors and children and official recognition of volunteers of all ages. A fourth priority was to increase the number of volunteer drivers for the Handi-Van and to begin a public transportation shuttle. Lastly, it was felt that increased medical services and assisted living residences in Cartwright would be beneficial.

## FINDINGS

### Thoughts/Opinions About Housing

Housing	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
There is enough housing for seniors in my community.	51.5	27.3	21.2
Housing for seniors is affordable in my community.	79.4	2.9	17.6
There is enough subsidized housing for low-income seniors in my community.	32.4	23.5	44.1
The waiting times to get into senior housing, such as assisted living, are reasonable in my community.	34.4	34.4	31.3
There is enough housing for younger people in my community.	50.0	30.0	20.0

### Thoughts/Opinions About Transportation

Transportation	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
The public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to shopping, senior centres, religious events, cultural events, and so forth is sufficient in my community.	47.1	38.2	14.7
The public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to and from medical appointments is sufficient in my community.	28.1	53.1	18.8
The transportation that is available for individuals with disabilities (e.g., Handi-Van) is sufficient in my community.	84.8	9.1	6.1
The public transportation (not provided by family or friends), including Handi-Van that is available in my community is affordable for seniors.	85.3	11.8	2.9

### Thoughts/Opinions About Infrastructure

Infrastructure	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
The road signs in my community are adapted to needs of older drivers (e.g., large signs).	59.4	21.9	18.8
There are sidewalks linking residences and essential services in most or all areas of my community.	54.5	42.4	3.0
Sidewalks in most or all areas of my community are well maintained (paved, even and not a lot of cracks).	39.4	60.6	0.0
Snow clearing in my community is done in a timely manner.	38.7	48.4	12.9
There are enough street crosswalks in <i>business areas</i> in my community.	63.3	20.0	16.7
There are enough street crosswalks in <i>residential and/or recreation</i> areas in my community.	58.8	26.5	14.7
There are enough public washrooms in key areas of my community (e.g., business and recreation areas).	35.3	50.0	14.7
Most or all businesses in my community are readily accessible to seniors (e.g., have wheelchair ramps, automatic doors).	38.2	55.9	5.9

### Thoughts/Opinions About Safety

Safety	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't know
Crime and vandalism are a problem in my community.	14.7	76.5	8.8
Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the <i>day</i> in my community.	100.0	0.0	0.0
Seniors feel safe when walking alone during the <i>night</i> in my community.	64.7	17.6	17.6

### Thoughts/Opinions About Social Participation/Recreation

Social Participation/Recreation	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don' Know
Local parks or walking trails in my community are accessible to seniors.	69.4	16.7	13.9
There are enough exercise classes specifically for seniors in my community.	2.8	63.9	33.3
There are enough recreation programs specifically for seniors in my community (e.g., card games, arts, crafts).	57.1	14.3	28.6
There are enough lifelong learning programs specifically for seniors in my community (e.g., computer courses).	11.4	51.4	37.1
There are enough programs in my community that bring seniors and children together (e.g., school reading programs, children going to nursing homes).	18.2	51.5	30.3
Recreational activities, such as exercise and other recreational programs, are generally affordable for seniors.	42.4	21.2	36.4

### Thoughts/Opinions About Community/Work Force Participation

Community/Work Force Participation	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
There are enough volunteer opportunities for seniors in my community.	60.6	12.1	27.3
There is enough official recognition for seniors who volunteer in my community (e.g., an appreciation banquet or volunteer awards).	43.8	37.5	18.8
There are enough paid job opportunities for seniors in my community.	18.8	40.6	40.6
The job opportunities in my community accommodate the needs of seniors (e.g., part-time work is available).	18.2	36.4	45.5

### Thoughts/Opinions About Information/Advocacy

Information/Advocacy	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Information about community events is readily available to seniors in my community.	94.1	2.9	2.9
Information about services and programs provided by various organizations is readily available to seniors in my community.	94.1	0.0	5.9
Official, written information, such as forms or brochures is adapted to the needs of seniors (e.g., large print).	51.5	12.1	36.4
Public telephone answering services in my community are adapted to the needs of seniors (e.g., instructions are given slowly enough).	36.4	12.1	51.5
There is enough assistance available in my community for completing official forms (e.g., help with filling out income tax forms).	45.5	18.2	36.4
There are enough seniors' advocacy services available in my community (e.g., ombudsman).	24.2	24.2	51.5

### Thoughts/Opinions About Respect and Social Inclusion

Respect and Social Isolation	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Seniors in my community are generally treated with respect.	100.0	0.0	0.0
Seniors serve in an advisory role to municipal government in my community (e.g., there is a seniors' council).	45.5	33.3	21.2
Community consultations in my community specifically include seniors.	68.8	12.5	18.8
Planning processes in my community specifically consider needs of seniors.	81.3	6.3	12.5

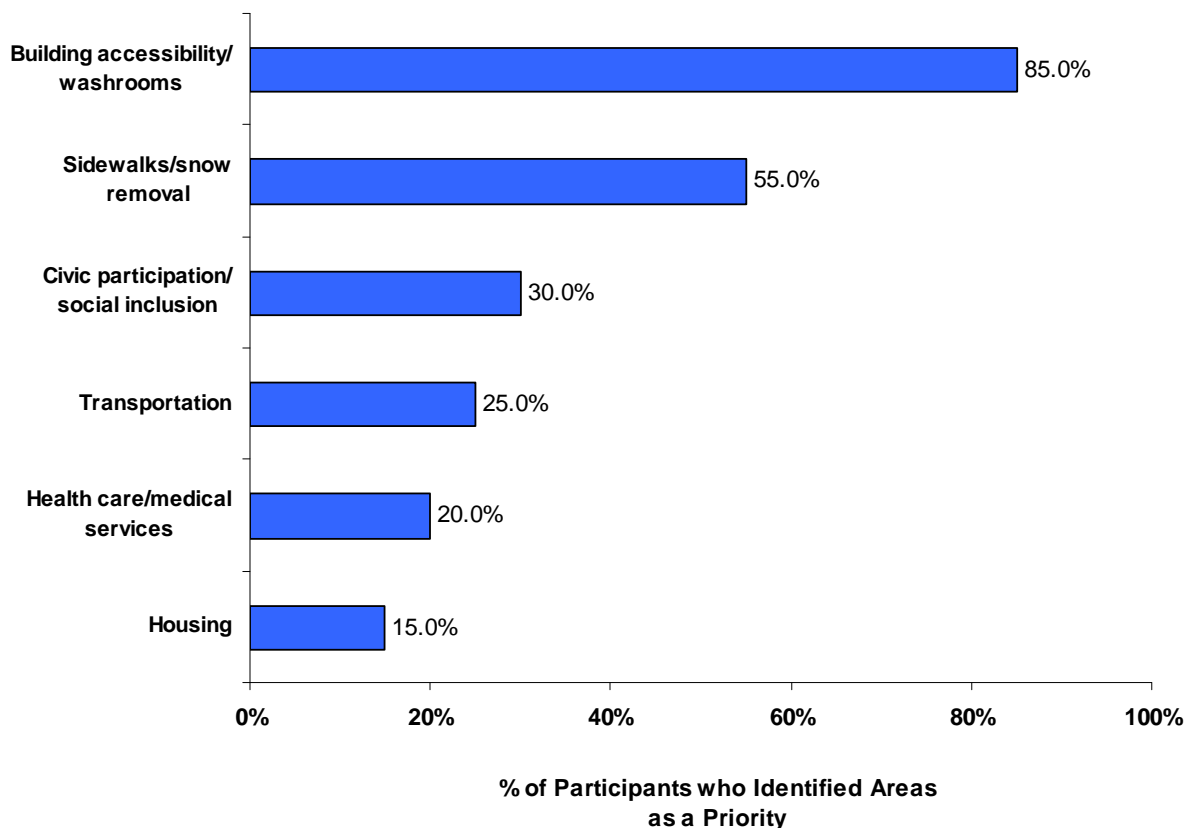
### Thoughts/Opinions About Health and Community Services

Health and Community Services	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Don't know
The home care services for seniors are sufficient in my community.	67.6	8.8	23.5
The services that help seniors around the home (eg., snow removal, lawn care, garbage brought to the street) are sufficient in my community.	61.8	20.6	17.6
The congregate meal programs available (e.g., lunch at recreation or senior centre) are sufficient in my community.	55.9	11.8	32.4
The meal delivery services that bring meals to seniors' homes are sufficient in my community.	90.9	3.0	6.1
The health care services that are provided in my community meet needs of seniors (e.g., hospital, physicians).	20.6	70.6	8.8
Public transportation (not provided by family or friends) to health care services that are <i>not</i> provided in my community is sufficient.	29.4	41.2	29.4
Access to health care services that are <i>not</i> provided in my community is generally convenient (e.g., services not too far away, appointment times are convenient).	35.3	47.1	17.6

## PRIORITY AREAS

Individuals were also asked to write down the top five issues they felt needed to be most urgently addressed in their community. Twenty participants (55.6%) identified at least one priority area. These written comments were grouped into the priority areas as shown in Figure 1: **building accessibility/washrooms** (e.g., doors open in instead of out, ramps not adequate, wheelchair access to auditorium, wheelchair accessible washrooms, public washrooms in business areas); **sidewalks/snow removal** (e.g., proper sidewalks, paved sidewalk on railway bed to bridge, snow clearing off sidewalks, sidewalks and snow clearance off sidewalks made better); **civic participation/social inclusion** (e.g., improved communication between seniors and children, official recognition of all volunteers of all ages, adequate school facilities to allow for integration of students and seniors); **transportation** (e.g., affordable and available public transportation, more handi-van and volunteer drivers needed, public transportation non-existent); **health care/medical services** (e.g., availability of doctors, doctor's office back in Cartwright, provide health care services in the area) and **housing** (e.g., affordable housing, assisted living housing).

**Figure 1: Priority Areas Identified by Participants**



This summary was prepared by the Age-Friendly Community-University Research Alliance (CURA). The CURA is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

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