Dear Study Participants:

During 2010-2011, you participated in a study (W.I.S.E.R. - Phase Four) conducted by Dr. Alexander Segall and Dr. Verena Menec at the University of Manitoba. We would like to thank you again for your willingness to be interviewed. Without your help, it would not have been possible to complete this project.

As you may recall, you were asked a variety of questions about your health, leisure activities, and the neighbourhood in which you live. A total of 341 people participated in this study. This study is part of a larger program of research on age-friendly communities. The Age-Friendly Communities CURA (Community-University Research Alliance) is a five-year research project looking at ways to make communities more age-friendly for all people, including seniors. Selected findings from the W.I.S.E.R. Phase Four study are highlighted in this brief report.
Who participated in this study?

- The 341 people interviewed were between 65 and 94 years old. The average age was 75 years.
- Just over one-half (54%) of the participants interviewed were female.
- Approximately two-thirds (68%) of participants were married.

What is an Age-Friendly Community?

An age-friendly community provides supports and opportunities in several areas (World Health Organization, 2006) including:

- Housing
- Transportation
- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Volunteering
- Activity Participation
- Communication and Information
- Community Support and Health Services

The following provides a summary of what WISER Four study participants told us in relation to these age-friendly dimensions.
Nearly all participants (95%) stated that they are ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with their current dwelling.

Forty-six percent (46%) agreed that their dwelling is adapted to the needs of seniors, for example, it has no steps or has an elevator, and has wide doorways.

Just over one-half of participants (53%) felt it would be easy to adapt their current dwelling to the needs of seniors (e.g., put in a ramp, widen doorways); 47% do not think this would be easy.

Close to one-third (31%) thought that they will need to move out of their current dwelling in the future. Among those who feel that they might eventually move, the majority would prefer to move to a seniors’ apartment/assisted living facility (47%) or a condo/apartment (31%).

The majority of participants (85%) stated they would prefer to stay in their neighbourhood into old age.

When doing errands or attending events...

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of participants stated that they drove themselves ‘daily’.

Over one-quarter (27%) said that a family member or friend drives them ‘once a week to several times a week’.

Nearly one-quarter (24%) stated that they walk ‘once a week to several times a week’.

Approximately 15% reported using public transit ‘less than once a month’.
Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

- Forty-one percent (41%) of participants ‘strongly agreed’ that the sidewalks in their neighbourhood are well maintained (paved, even, few cracks); another 32% ‘somewhat agreed’ with this statement.

The sidewalks in my neighbourhood are well maintained

- Similarly, 41% ‘strongly agreed’ that sidewalks are cleared of snow and ice in a timely manner in the winter, while 33% ‘somewhat agreed’ that this is true.

- Approximately two-thirds of participants (67%) ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘somewhat agreed’ that there are crosswalks and pedestrian signals to help walkers cross busy streets in their neighbourhood.
• Around 43% ‘strongly agreed’ that there are stores within easy walking distance of their home; an additional 23% ‘somewhat agreed’ with this statement.

• Nearly three-quarters (74%) of those interviewed ‘strongly agreed’ that it is easy to walk to a transit stop from their home.

• Approximately 38% of participants ‘strongly agreed’ that access to businesses in their neighbourhood is adapted to the needs of seniors (e.g., automatic doors, wheelchair ramps) and that businesses in the community are sensitive to seniors’ needs (e.g., provide delivery services, large print menus); approximately one-half of participants ‘somewhat agreed’ with each of these statements.

• In total, 92% of participants ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘somewhat agreed’ that most public bathrooms in their neighbourhood are handicap accessible.
Volunteering & Employment

- Eighteen percent (18%) of participants worked; approximately 43% worked full-time and 56% worked part-time.

  ![Pie chart illustrating the amount of time spent volunteering.]

  - Over 15 hours/month: 4%
  - 5 to 15 hours/month: 32%
  - 1 to 4 hours/month: 26%
  - Less than 1 hour/month: 38%

- Nearly one-half of all participants (46%) performed unpaid volunteer work in the past year. Of those who volunteered, close to one-third (32%) volunteered over 15 hours per month.

- In addition, 43% of participants provided unpaid transportation such as driving a family member or friend to the doctor or store; and over one-quarter (27%) did unpaid babysitting in the last six months.
Activity Participation

- Individuals participated in a variety of activities during their leisure time. Watching television, reading, and listening to the radio/music were mentioned most often.

- The top three organized activities that participants engaged in ‘once a week to several times a week’ were:
  1. Exercise/physical fitness programs
  2. Organized church or other religious related activities
  3. Games (e.g., bridge)

- In this study, 77% of participants agreed to wear a pedometer to measure their activity level. On average, individuals took 4576 steps per day.

#### Daily leisure activity participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watching television</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to radio/music</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone conversations</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer use</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical activities</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing games</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting friends/relatives</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crafts/hobbies</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, 70% of participants rated the availability of information about the health care services that exist in Winnipeg as ‘good’ and 14% rated it as ‘excellent’.

Fourteen percent (14%) rated the availability of information about community supports, such as home care and meal delivery, as ‘excellent’; another 73% rated it as ‘good’.

Nearly all participants (96%) rated the availability of information about leisure and recreation programs that exist in Winnipeg as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’.

Close to three-quarters of participants (72%) rated the availability of health care services in Winnipeg as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’; and 83% thought that the quality of health care services in Winnipeg was ‘good’ or ‘excellent’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health services in Winnipeg</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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