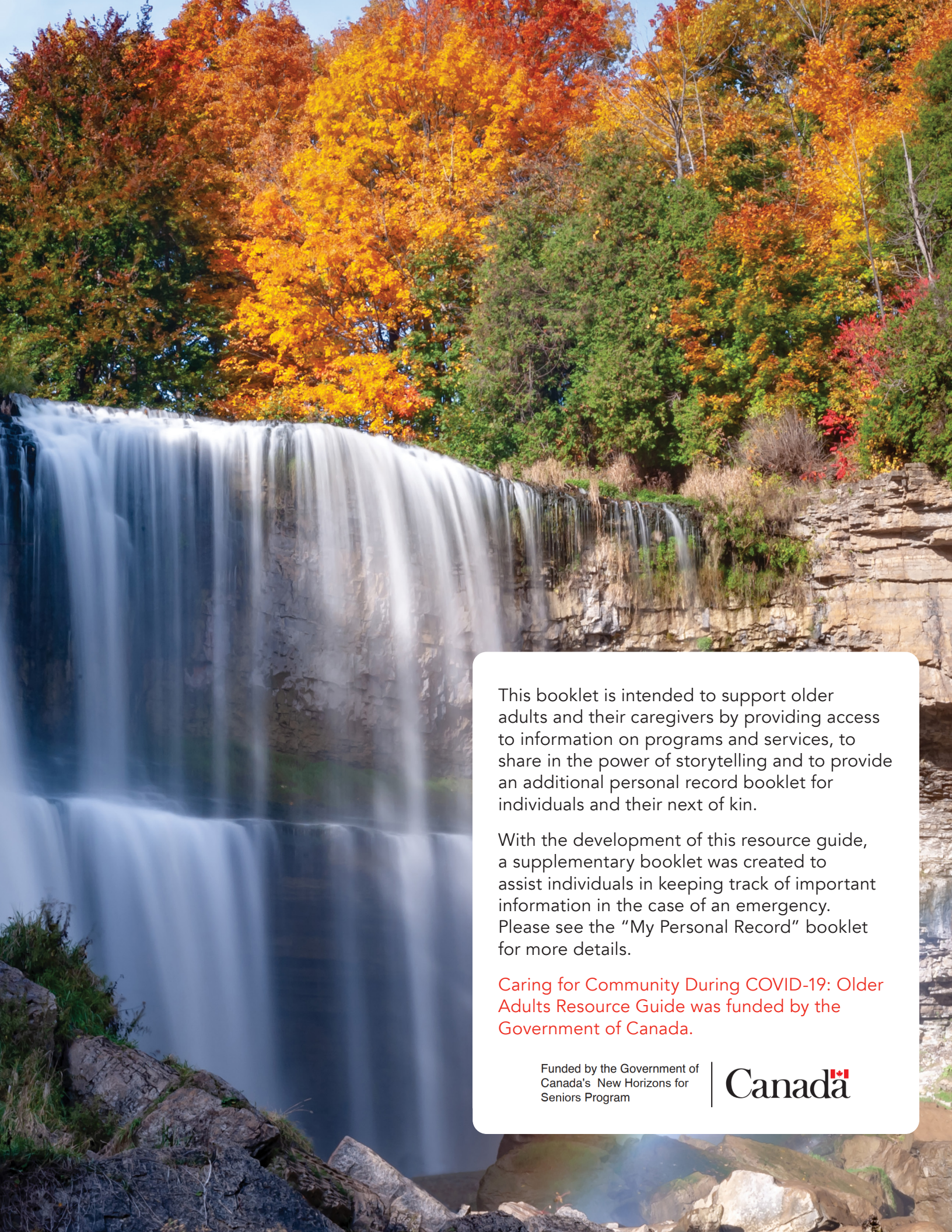




United Way
Halton & Hamilton

Caring for Community During COVID-19

Older Adults Resource Guide
January 2022



This booklet is intended to support older adults and their caregivers by providing access to information on programs and services, to share in the power of storytelling and to provide an additional personal record booklet for individuals and their next of kin.

With the development of this resource guide, a supplementary booklet was created to assist individuals in keeping track of important information in the case of an emergency. Please see the “My Personal Record” booklet for more details.

Caring for Community During COVID-19: Older Adults Resource Guide was funded by the Government of Canada.

Funded by the Government of
Canada's New Horizons for
Seniors Program

Canada

Welcome Message

The City of Hamilton is situated upon the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas. This land is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, which was an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. We further acknowledge that this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1784, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

The City of Hamilton as we know it today is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island (North America). United Way Halton & Hamilton recognizes that in order to build healthy communities we must commit to learning about the rich history of this land as well as unlearning the colonialist way of thinking so that we can better understand how to live in harmony. In preparation for this resource guide the Retired Labour Leader Volunteer Council was incredibly thankful to Joanne Webb for supporting the resources specifically focused on assisting local Indigenous community members.

“Our whole life is a series of lessons, insights and understandings that lead us down a path of enlightenment and wisdom. To come to know the World is to be wise. To come to know oneself is to be enlightened. To become free we must let go and be present with ourselves in the Eternal now. Be in the World, but not of the World. The reward is satisfaction. For where there is no expectation there is joy. This joy can be yours. For life to be a full, rich experience, we must give as well as take, serve as well as lead. Without a student, there is no teacher. Without listening, there is no message. When we take from nature we also give something in return. Life is a continuous exchange of give and take to complete

the moving circle. Traditional wealth is measured by what we give rather than by what we possess. Always be prepared to give. Now is the time. That will be your reward. Peace and solidarity.”

**Miigwetch,
Joanne Webb**

*Hamilton Regional Native Centre Board
Member, Retired Labour Activist, Retired
Labour Leader Volunteer Council Member*

We would like to thank all those who supported the development of this booklet. Thank you to the Government of Canada for providing funding for this project through the New Horizons for Seniors Program. Thank you to our partners of the Retired Labour Leader Volunteer Council (RLLVC): Congress of Union Retirees (CURC), Ontario Federation of Union Retirees (OFUR), Hamilton Regional Native Centre, City of Hamilton Council on Aging, the City of Hamilton's Seniors Advisory Committee, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton Health Coalition, Salvation Army Hamilton Community and Family Services and Catholic Family Services for sharing information and resources. Thank you to all the community members who stepped forward to share their stories navigating the pandemic. We would also like to acknowledge the Unifor National Retiree 'My Little Red Record Book' for inspiration for our “My Personal Record” booklet. Special thanks to the amazing volunteers of the council who made this all possible!

You are encouraged to print copies as needed.
Online version available at uwhh.ca/labour

**With gratitude,
United Way Halton & Hamilton and The
Retired Labour Leader Volunteer Council**

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Emergency Services and Crisis Services

Services listed in this booklet may be impacted in response to COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

Please contact the service provider prior to visiting in person to receive up-to-date information on services being provided (eg. wait times, hours of operation etc.).

Emergency Services
Ambulance, fire and police
emergency response **CALL 911**

Poison Control Information
Ontario Poison Centre
1-800-268-9017
ontariopoisoncentre.ca

Crisis and Distress Services

These Services are Located in Hamilton:

**Good Shepherd Centres - Barrett
Centre for Crisis Support**

400 King St W, PO Box 1003,
Hamilton, ON L8N 3R1

905-529-4343

**Salvation Army (The) - Hamilton -
Community and Family Services - Hope Line**

80 Bay St N, Hamilton, ON L8R 3N3

905-522-1477

**Sexual Assault Centre Hamilton Area -
24 Hour Support Line**

905-525-4162

**St Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton -
West 5th Campus - Mental Health and
Addiction Services - Crisis Outreach
and Support Team (COAST)**

905-972-8338

**St Matthew's House -
Crisis Intervention Program**

414 Barton St E, Hamilton, ON L8L 2Y3

905-523-5546 ext 231

These Services are Located Outside
of Hamilton and are Available to
Hamilton Residents:

Assaulted Women's Helpline

Six Points Plaza, PO Box 40569, Etobicoke,
ON M9B 6K8 Helpline in GTA

416-863-0511

**Canada. Health Canada - First Nations
and Inuit Health Branch - First Nations
and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line**

French language services or programs
offered to customers/clients on a
consistent basis.

1-855-242-3310

Distress Centre Halton

PO Box 776, Oakville, ON L6K 0A9

905-849-4559 ext 102

**Fem'aide - Ligne de Soutien pour
Femmes Touchées par la Violence**

French language services or programs
offered to customers/clients on a
consistent basis.

1-877-336-2433 (1-877-FEM-AIDE)

**National Indian Residential
School Crisis Line**

1-866-925-4419

Emergency Housing

Emergency Shelter for Families:

Good Shepherd Family Centre

Housing-focused shelter and support for families experiencing homelessness in the Hamilton area. All services and supports are focused on helping families secure housing in a timely manner. Shelter diversion and eviction prevention services are also available to families that qualify.

143 Wentworth Street South,
Hamilton, Ontario L8N 2Z1

905-528-9442

Emergency Shelters for Men:

Good Shepherd Centre

Emergency shelter for men in need of temporary accommodation. A daily hot meal is provided for non residents. Bagged lunches and food bank services available. Clothing and household items available, if needed.

135 Mary Street, Box 1003,
Hamilton, Ontario L8N 3R1

905-525-4162

Mission Services Men's Residence

Emergency men's shelter with programs available to adult men experiencing a crisis in housing, including support with clothing, finances, and personal well-being.

325 James Street North,
Hamilton, Ontario L8L 1H3

905-528-7635

Emergency Housing

Emergency Shelters for Men:

Salvation Army Booth Centre

Emergency shelter for men, that provides a bagged lunch. Also offering a daily traveling meal van, stopping at several downtown locations between 9:00 P.M. and midnight. Call for a schedule.

94 York Boulevard,
Hamilton, Ontario L8R 1R6

905-527-1444

Emergency Shelters for Women:

Interval House of Hamilton

A safe emergency shelter for women with or without children fleeing abuse/violence. Free confidential services include meals, emergency clothing and hygiene needs, and emergency transportation seven days a week.

Crisis Line: 905-387-8881
Business Line: 905-387-9959

Martha House

Emergency family shelter specializing in the care of victims of domestic violence. 28 bed security-equipped transition house for women and children in crisis.

Crisis Line: 905-523-6277
Business Line: 905-523-8895

Emergency Housing

Good Shepherd Mary's Place

9-bed emergency shelter for homeless women 18 years and older who may experience difficulty in accessing the shelter system.

20 Pearl Street North,
Hamilton, Ontario L8R 2Y8

Crisis line: 905-523-6277
Business line: 905-540-8000

Native Women's Centre

Provides safe emergency shelter for all women regardless of age, ancestry, culture, place of origin or sexual orientation, with or without children, who are experiencing a crisis in their lives due to family violence, homelessness, or conflict with the law.

905-522-1501

Inasmuch House

Emergency shelter for abused and homeless women and their children, as well as female teenagers over the age of 16.

Crisis Line: 905-529-8600
Business Line: 905-529-8149

Womankind

Emergency shelter for single women.

905-521-9591

Emergency Food

Below is a list of food bank services open and available to Hamilton residents. To learn more please call the service closest to you or contact Hamilton Food share at **905-664-9065**. Visit hamiltonfoodshare.org to learn more.

Food Banks

Salvation Army, Dundas

150 King St. W.,
Dundas ON L9H 1V4

905-627-0572
[By appointment only]

Salvation Army

80 Bay St. N., Hamilton ON L8R 3N3

905-540-1888 ext. 101
[By appointment only]

Good Shepherd Venture Centre

155 Cannon St. E., Hamilton ON L8L 0A2

905-972-9485
[By appointment only]

Mission Services of Hamilton

196 Wentworth St. N.,
Hamilton ON L8L 5V7

Hours of Operation:
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday,
9am-12pm and 1pm-3pm

Tuesday and Thursday, 9am-12pm

905-528-4212

Food Banks

Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg

785 Britannia Ave, Hamilton, ON L8H 2B5

Accepting phone calls from:
Monday to Thursday 9am – 4pm.

905-549-4884 ext. 416

[By appointment only – please call
to schedule an appointment]

Living Rock Ministries

30 Wilson St., Hamilton ON L8R 1C5

Hours of Operation:
Monday to Friday 9am-10am (Breakfast)

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 4pm-5pm
(Dinner)

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 1pm-4pm
(Food Hampers)

Saturday 1pm-4pm (Meals and Food
Hampers)

905-528-7625 ext. 259

Welcome Inn Community Centre

40 Wood St. E., Hamilton ON L8L 3Y3

Hours of Operation:
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
10:30am-2pm

905-525-5824

Food Banks

Neighbour to Neighbour Centre

28 Athens St., Hamilton ON L9C 3K9

Hours of Operation:
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
9:30am-3:15pm.

Thursday 12:30pm-7:15pm

905-574-1334

[By appointment only]

*Stoney Creek Food Bank

605 Highway #8, Stoney Creek ON L8G 5G2

Hours of Operation:
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
9:30am-1pm

905-643-2090

***only serves residents of Stoney Creek.**

Flamborough Food Bank

1432 Centre Road, Carlisle, ON L0R 1H1

Hours of Operation:
Wednesdays 1-8pm

905-690-1036

Ancaster Community Services

300 Wilson Street East, Ancaster,
ON L9G 2B9

Hours of Operation:
Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm

905-648-6675

[By appointment only]

Meal Programs

Good Shepherd Centre

135 Mary St., Hamilton ON L8R 1K4

905-972-9485

Wesley Urban Ministries

52 Catharine St. N., Hamilton ON L8R 1J1

905-528-5629

[Please call for more details]

De Mazenod Door Outreach, St. Patrick's Church

440 King St. E, Hamilton, ON L8N 1C6

Hours of Operation:
Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday, Thursday 10am-11am
and 11am-12pm (Breakfast and Lunch)

Friday (BBQ) 10am-11am (Breakfast),
1pm-2:30pm (Lunch)

905-522 -9828

VON Hamilton

905-522-1022
von.ca/en/service/meals-wheels

Ancaster Community Services

905-648-6675
ancastercommunityservices.ca/

Meal Programs

Dundas Community Services

905-627-5461
dundascommunityservices.on.ca

Glanbrook Community Services

905-692-3464
glanbrookcommunityservices.ca

Supported Emergency Food Programs

The Eva Rothwell Centre

Emergency Food Pantry via appointment.

Appointments can be made by contacting
905-526-1558 ext. 408
(Non-perishable and hygiene items only)

Jewish Family Services Kosher Food Bank

30 King Street East, Dundas

Hours of Operation:
Monday to Friday 10am – 3:30pm
(Please call ahead to schedule an
appointment or book a delivery)

905-627-9922 ext. 25

Baraka Food Box at Hamilton Mountain Mosque

Please visit their website or email
info@mishkasocialservices.org
for more information.

Community Services, Agencies and Resources

There are many services that are available to support community members. Please be aware that services and programs may be impacted by COVID-19 regulations and should be contacted to confirm availability. Below are some resources that are available at the time of publishing this booklet (January 2022), and is by no means an exhaustive list.



Call or search '211' to speak with a live person about services. 211 Ontario provides answers about where to go for help, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in 150+ languages!

The Red Book of Community Information by Hamilton Public Library provides trusted, up-to-date information about social services and community resources for residents of Hamilton. Visit redbook.hpl.ca for services in Hamilton and the surrounding areas, or call **905-546-3200**.

Online News and Information

CBC Hamilton
cbc.ca

Government of Canada
canada.ca

City of Hamilton
905-526-2424
hamilton.ca

Government of Ontario
ontario.ca

About COVID-19

City of Hamilton: Public HealthWeb
905-974-9848
phscovid19@hamilton.ca
hamilton.ca/coronavirus/media-room

COVID-19 HOTLINE:
905-546- 2424 ext. 7970

Hamilton Public Library: Vaccine Certificates

Anyone with a green Ontario Health card can print on the go or visit any HPL branch to print and laminate their vaccine receipts for free.

hpl.ca/VaccineCertificates

Public Health Agency of Canada:
canada.ca/en/public-health.html

Where to Call for Support, Counselling Help and Information

211 Community Connection/211 Hamilton (24 hr)

211

Alzheimer Society of Hamilton-Halton
905-529-7030

Barrett Centre for Crisis Support, Good Shepherd Centre (24 hr)
905-529-7878

Canadian Mental Health Association
905-521-0090

Catholic Family Services Intensive Case Management for Seniors at Risk
905-527-3823 ext. 237

Centre de Santé Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara
1-866-437-7606

Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)
905-523-8600

Hamilton Police Services (HPS) Seniors Support Officers
905-546-4925

Hamilton Police Services (HPS) Victim Services (24 hr)

905-546-4904

Information Hamilton
905-528-8127

Multicultural Seniors Outreach Program, Wesley Urban Ministries
905-528-5629

Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (ONPEA)
416-916-6728

Seniors' Safety Line (24 hr)
1-866-299-1011

St. Matthew's House
905-523-5546

St. Joseph's Home Care
905-522-6887

VON Canada, Hamilton Site
905-529-0700



“ Overcoming Loneliness

I am 78 years old with some health problems. My family lives far away, and I became very lonely.

At first, there were no in-person doctor's appointments, and it wouldn't have mattered, as I couldn't even access the Darts transportation service. I also had a scooter on order, but that was on hold which meant I couldn't go out much. I needed that scooter to get around because I didn't know how far my legs would carry me so I was a little afraid to go out. I couldn't even go to my friend's funeral because of the restriction of attendees.

I was very lucky because the Hamilton Regional Indian Centre (HRIC) called me once a week for a wellness check. They also asked if we wanted a hot meal that could be sent out every Wednesday,

that came with a bag of fruit and veggies. Once a month, the program also offered a bag of groceries. That really helped as I couldn't get out much.

They also had programs on their Facebook page, with different crafts or activities, almost every day.

When times were normal, I would use the Darts service once a week to visit the centre to get a hot lunch, play cards, or do crafts - but at least we got to be with people. It got really lonely after COVID-19 hit. But at least I had people calling me because I really needed to be near humans.

The first couple of months were the worst. No one wanted to be with anyone, and there was nothing to do anyway.

We had no outdoor activities like Pow Wows, gatherings, and family reunions for almost two years now. Lately, things are coming back to life. I'm still waiting on my scooter because there is a shortage, but the Darts service is back operating so I can get around even if there is not much to do.

One of the activities that we created was a phone tree. It involved six of us, and we took turns calling each other. This worked out great.

I must say that I really don't know what I would have done without the HRIC. They really kept my mind busy and I actually met some new friends.

I really think that we need to keep this information on file in case we have to go through this again.

I pray to the Creator that this does not happen but if it does, we will be ready.

I must say it is really a good feeling getting back to normal, even if it is a slow return.

We have realized that we need to stay connected, as it is very hard to be alone and it really isn't very healthy. Now that this is happening (getting back to normal), we must stay strong and keep moving on. Now I know how to help others and myself. Just remember, that even one call can make a world of difference to yourself and others. Please stay strong and we will see you down the road.

Program participant, age 78

Where to go or Programs Focused on Specific Communities

Indigenous Services Supporting Older Adults:

Life Long Care provides community support services to Urban Aboriginal residents living with disabilities or those requiring continuum of care for acute or chronic illness, regardless of age.

905-548-9593
hric.ca

Seniors Without Walls is a recreational and social program which supplies activities for seniors, such as bingo, arts and crafts, and cultural programs. Formerly providing lunch to participants and operating a food bank, currently it delivers meals to senior participants every Wednesday and food baskets once a month.

905-973-0891
hamilton.ca/recreation

Aboriginal Alcohol/Drug Program provides preventive services, intake/intervention, assessment and awareness programs in the areas of alcohol, drug and substance abuse. Open to all ages.

905-544-4320
aboriginalhealthcentre.com

The Courtwork Program provides support to all Indigenous, First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples (regardless of status), who are in conflict with the law or legal system. Open to all ages.

905-548-9593
hric.ca

Programs Focused on Supporting LGBTQ2S+ Older Adult Community Members:

The Recovery Village is dedicated to helping LGBTQ2S+ individuals struggling with substance abuse into recovery. The program provides those struggling with addiction and their parents, families, and friends with educational information on how to get help.

877-594-1750
therecoveryvillage.com

The Hamilton-Wentworth chapter of PFLAG Canada is a community resource providing support, information and education, and community to people around issues of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation - their own, and those of others.

1-888-530-6777 ext 564
hamiltonwentworth@pflagcanada.ca

Trans Peer Support provides confidential information, advocacy, and meetings to assist transgendered and gender non-conforming individuals and their allies.

Participants may bring one cis person with them for support.

For more detailed information contact:
transpeers@gmail.com
resources.youthline.ca/resource/Hamilton-Trans-Peer-Support-Group

The AIDS Network (TAN) is a community based organization committed to recognizing and responding to the stigma and challenges posed by HIV and AIDS on individuals and communities through education, support and outreach.

905-528-0854
Toll Free: 1-866-563-0563
aidsnetwork.ca

Trans Community Health (TCH) is a twice-monthly clinic for trans and gender non-conforming individuals. The clinic facilitates gender transitioning and hormone therapy for anyone 16 years and older. Please visit the website for more access to support groups.

905-526-7137
shelterhealthnetwork.ca

Where to get Information About Financial Assistance

City of Hamilton Special Supports Program

905-546-2590

Hamilton Free Tax Clinic

905-522-1148 ext. 456

Under 65 - Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

905-546-4800

65 + - Old Age Pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement (Federal)

1-800-277-9914

Where to get Legal or Court Support

ACE (Advocacy Centre for the Elderly)

1-416-598-2656

Legal Aid

1-800-668-8258

Victim Services – Hamilton Police Services

905-546-4904

Transportation

As noted in the McMaster Optimal Aging Portal (1), age-related changes in physical and mental health may impact the ability to navigate one's home and neighbourhood. Individuals may see these effects when they walk, (with or without assistive devices), ride a bicycle, drive, or use public transportation.

Public Transportation

Access to a reliable means of public transportation is essential for older adults to remain connected to family, friends, loved ones, and to be engaged in communities as they age. Older adults are more likely to remain active members in their communities if public transportation is available, dependable, structured to address challenges to mobility, are easy to access, and are reasonably priced.

Bus

In Hamilton, the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) provides bus service to all areas of the city. Information can be obtained about the routes and schedule, on the ATS DARTS User Guide found at [hamilton.ca](https://www.hamilton.ca). All buses in Hamilton have Accessible Low Floors (ramps) and the International Symbol for Accessibility appears on the front and side of the bus which provides level entry and exit from the bus. These floors make it easier for everyone, especially for people in wheelchairs, scooters and walkers to access the service.

As of March 15, 2021, the HSR has ended the sale and use of all paper tickets and passes. When using the bus, there are four methods used to pay:

1. Cash.
2. PRESTO.
3. PRESTO E-Ticket.
4. Transfer.

Tap and Go with PRESTO

PRESTO is an electronic fare system that allows transit users to pay for their journey quickly, easily, securely and in advance. PRESTO cards can be loaded with HSR passes (PRESTO PASS) or with money (PRESTO E-purse) to use as fare.

The process to purchase a PRESTO card is:

1. In-person visit the HSR ticket office at 36 Hunter St. GO Station, Hamilton City Hall or at Municipal Service Centers in Dundas, Ancaster, or Stoney Creek. Shoppers Drug Mart or Fortinos locations in Hamilton also provide PRESTO cards. The PRESTO card has an initial fee to the rider of \$6 (HST included). The minimum load onto the card is \$0.05 in-person, online and using the PRESTO App. The minimum load by phone is \$10.
2. Go online. Visit the Website: prestocard.ca. The individual's card will be mailed within 7-10 business days. Individuals may create a My PRESTO Account if they wish.
3. Phone **1-877-378-6123**. Funds loaded by phone may take up to 24 hours to load and will be updated on the card once it has tapped a PRESTO device.

Instructions on how to register and activate the PRESTO card can be found at [hamilton.ca](https://www.hamilton.ca).



PRESTO-E Tickets

The PRESTO E-Tickets are a new, convenient and touchless way to pay transit fare that is now available for HSR customers. E-tickets are the ideal fare payment type for occasional riders, visitors, or group travel for multiple passengers. PRESTO E-Tickets can be purchased, activated and displayed for payment by an individual on a smartphone.

The process is:

1. Buy the E-Ticket using the PRESTO E-Ticket app on a smartphone before travelling.

2. Before boarding, activate the E-Ticket with a smartphone.
3. Once boarded, the E-Ticket is the proof of payment so make sure to have it displayed on a smartphone when boarding to show the driver and in case of inspection.

To use the PRESTO E-ticket, show the driver the activated PRESTO E-Ticket.

Accessible Transportation

Accessible transportation is intended for persons with physical or functional disabilities or health conditions who are unable to access fixed-route public transit. Accessible Transportation Services (ATS) is the City of Hamilton department that determines eligibility, registers passengers for DARTS and Taxi Scrip, and provides ongoing customer care. ATS is open between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday.

Below are just some of the programs offered in the region to access transportation. To learn more visit redbook.hpl.ca or 211ontario.ca.

DARTS (Disabled and Aged Regional Transportation System)

DARTS is a bus service that is meant for people who use wheelchairs or scooters or are unable to use the city bus because of a health problem. The bus will pick up from one's home and provide transport to a desired location. A form is required prior to using this service. A family doctor is required to fill-out a portion of the form, which must be sent to the City of Hamilton. There is a fee for this service.

905-529-1212

*Dundas Community Services - Assisted Transportation Services

A non-emergency, door-to-door transportation service within the Hamilton city. Volunteer drivers accompany clients to and from medical appointments and grocery shopping.

905-627-5461

*contact to confirm eligibility.

Red Cross Transportation

Red Cross Transportation will provide rides to and from medical appointments. Individuals will be picked up from their residence, taken to their appointment and returned home.

905-522-8485 ext. 1216

Seniors for Seniors Driver Companions

Spectrum Healthcare provides driver companions to transport older adults to and from medical appointments, shopping centres, grocery stores, the bank, or social events and gatherings.

905-572-6162

Toll-Free: 1-844-422-7399

Taxi Program

Using the taxi program, one can obtain a discount on taxi rides. A form is required prior to using this service. A family doctor is required to fill out a portion of the form, which must be sent to the City of Hamilton. There is a fee for this service.

905-529-1212

VON Hamilton Volunteer Drivers

Volunteer drivers provide rides to and from medical appointments. Individuals will be picked up from their residence, taken to their appointment and returned home. The driver will come to the waiting room with the individual, and wait for them to finish their appointment. There is a fee for this service, however, costs are low.

905-529-0700



“ Fears of Contracting COVID-19

I do my best to stay in my building. Watching the news on how COVID-19 impacted elderly individuals has scared me, so I avoid going out in public. I can sometimes get help from a neighbour to do my shopping, but it isn't something that I can rely on constantly. I struggle with mobility issues - I can't stand on my own for more than 20 seconds. Coupling that with a fear of contracting COVID-19, makes it a challenge to even do my laundry in the building and to take out the garbage.

I will not take a bus and I am worried about taking a cab because of the close contact with the

driver. I'm also unclear about cleaning procedures for both bus and cab seating. This makes it difficult for me to go out and get a vaccine. I hope that even after COVID-19 is a memory, that people continue to utilize the safety procedures that we practice now. If you have a cough or a sneeze, wear a mask, wash/sanitize your hands and stay a safe distance away from people whenever possible.

Program participant, age 64

Staying Active in Your Community

While it's important to stay at home, practice hand washing, disinfecting, etc., it's also wise to spend time socializing with friends and neighbours, whether they live with individuals, or connect virtually through applications such as Zoom, Facebook, and by phone. Social isolation and loneliness can be detrimental for health. It is important to reach out to others and ask that others connect!

Here are some tips from the Greater Hamilton Chapter of the Gerontological Nursing Association of Ontario and the Hamilton Council on Aging. (2)

1. Invite a friend to a dinner party over the phone or over Zoom. The "host" can send out a menu and recipes a week ahead. With the phone line or computer open, cook and eat together. Play a trivia game after dinner.

2. Remember pen pal letters and handwritten cards? Try writing to a friend; share some thoughts and reflections, a joke or picture and maybe a special memory. Try writing a handwritten letter to a young relative. Share with them a memory.
3. Walk in the neighbourhood and say hello to others. This can reduce the sense of isolation. Just walking 15-30 minutes/day makes a big difference in immune function.
4. Offer to cook for someone or say Yes! if someone offers to cook.

To find activities to get engaged within the community, the following resources are provided.

Visit hamilton.ca for specific activities of interest.



“ Emerging From Loneliness

I lost my partner in February, 2019. I was adjusting to my life as a single man, alone in the house with our dog. I had the support of my friends and family and was beginning to accept my new way of life, when the Coronavirus hit a year later.

A whole new world of 'alone' emerged. I did not drive so getting out became a problem. Fortunately, the young woman two doors down offered to do my grocery shopping for me. I kept in touch with my friends via the telephone. I did not realize how much I would miss face-to-face human contact. I kept myself busy reading scripts over the Internet and was looking forward to directing a show again.

Coronavirus was now called COVID-19. I love to garden and found it difficult for someone to take me to a nursery. I missed my garden, although I still enjoyed being able to sit in my backyard. Nothing beats the smell of spring. Winter was difficult and I missed holding my annual Christmas party.

Then there came anticipations of a vaccination coming sooner than expected. I could not wait. I received my first vaccination in early April, and then life got brighter. The promise of face-to-face human communication was going to become a reality. I received my second vaccination shot in June. I am so excited that I even have some lunch dates planned and a play booked to direct. Take that COVID-19 - life will return to normal.

Program participant, age 64

Resources to Stay Connected

Ancaster Community Services
provide services such as a food bank, Meals on Wheels, frozen meals, and Shopping 4 Seniors.

905-648-6675
ancastercommunityservices@gmail.com

Catholic Family Services of Hamilton
senior volunteer program is a social support network for seniors by seniors. Seniors are given the opportunity to talk by telephone with trained volunteers in their own age group. The volunteers use a self-help approach in assisting residents through difficult phases of their lives such as loneliness, marital separation, loss of spouse and health issues.

Senior Peer Volunteer Requirement:
Volunteers must be 50+, provide weekly phone contact to assist seniors 60+ by providing guidance, assisting in connecting with appropriate resources and non-professional counselling on a one-to-one basis. Volunteers are required to commit approximately 2-3 hours per week for this position. Training provided.

905-527-3823 ext. 279
cfshw.com

Continued on next page...

Resources to Stay Connected

Cyber Seniors – Connecting Generations links seniors to one-on-one telephone support for help with computer and online use for up to 45 minutes at a time. They also have daily webinars on different topics as well as past webinars on record.

1-844-217-3057
cyberseniors.org

Dundas Community Service provides Meals on Wheels, Frozen Meal Program, Assisted Transportation Services, Friendly Calling and Visiting Program.

905-627-5461
dundascommunityservices.on.ca

Hamilton Jewish Family Services - Kibbutz Corner - Seniors Center Without Walls provides a phone-in program called Kibbutz Corner which is open to everyone.

905-627-9922
hamiltonjfs.ca

The Hamilton Public Library offers a Virtual Branch with a variety of programs and activities.

Young at Heart and Seniors without Walls series:

- Large print and digital resources
- Friendly Calling program
- Bookmobile scheduled weekly stops

905-546-3200
hpl.ca/

The Hamilton YWCA offers classes Monday through Saturday by Zoom. Call or visit their website for details.

905-522-9922
ywcahamilton.org

Ontario Community Support Association's website to help find support during COVID-19. Helping isolated, low-income seniors and people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions across Ontario access meals, groceries, medicine and other essentials to stay safe at home during COVID-19.

416-256-3010
ontariocommunitysupport.ca

Seniors Isolation Project produces seniors stories through short videos to help individuals feel connected.

905-777-3837 ext. 12434
coahamilton.ca

Tech Serve allows volunteers to sign up to help older adults with their technology problems. Selected volunteers undergo screening and training. Simply fill out a form or call for support.

1-888-418-4771
techserveto.com



“ Neighbours Helping Neighbours

COVID-19 has made me feel very lonely and isolated. I recently moved to this building and haven't spent much time with many of my neighbours. I also recently returned to Ontario, so I've been learning a lot about programs and services available to me.

I'm lucky, however, that I have a friend who will drive me to appointments and help me out with things at home. She booked my vaccine and drove me to the appointment. I don't think I would've known how to book an appointment if it wasn't for her help.

I have a neighbour who helped me get the phone number for a hearing aid clinic near my apartment.

She also gave me some advice on who to contact should I have any issues with other tenants in the building. If she goes out anywhere she will call me to let me know where she's going and will call me when she gets in. If I leave my apartment I will do the same. I think it's important that people at my age help each other out as much as possible. It is important to have a network of support and, if you can, expand that network wherever possible to make yourself safer and more socially involved.

Program participant, age 80

Tech Tips

Technology has evolved quickly over the last decade, leaving some finding it difficult to keep up with it. Below are some tips and tricks to stay connected to loved ones while still staying safe online.

Change User Settings

Changing the settings on devices can make them user friendly. Consider increasing the text size, changing the brightness etc. Look for words like “accessibility” under Settings.

Check the Sources of Articles

The internet has provided a space for endless exchanges of information, but with this service comes the risk of misinformation. Make sure to check where information is coming from. For example, who wrote the information? Check multiple reputable sources to be sure that the information is truthful.

Choose Strong Passwords

It is important to protect one’s passwords to all accounts. Make sure to use special characters, symbols or numbers in order to make the password difficult to guess. Do not send passwords via social media, or by email.

How-To Books

The Hamilton Public Library and book stores in the community have a variety of helpful books on how to navigate technology. Some books are written just for older adults with simple and easy-to-follow instructions.

Privacy Settings on Social Media

One has the ability to alter privacy settings on social media platforms to private. Set to ‘private’ if the intention is to only share within one’s known networks.

Save Contacts

If frequent calls are made to specific individuals consider saving the contacts in the address book or contacts found in most devices. There one can view all contacts and tap on an individual’s name to call, video-chat or send a message.



Tip: If one has a smart device, it is recommended to add “ICE” (in case of emergency) to their emergency contact’s display name.

Take a Local Class or Workshop

Listed in Resources to Stay Connected on page 17 there are some helpful programs that offer classes, or workshops to support one in navigating technologies. Learning something new doesn’t need to feel daunting. Make sure to reach out and ask for help.



Elder Abuse

“The abuse of older persons is any action or inaction that causes harm to an older person. The abuser may be a family member, friend, neighbour, or care giver. Signs of abuse can be identified by suspicious or unexplained injuries, poor hygiene or bedsores, anxiety or depression, malnutrition or dehydration, weight loss or misuse of medication and lack of food or other necessities.”(3)

For more information on preventing, identifying or reporting elder abuse, the following resources are provided.

Catholic Family Services of Hamilton
905-527-3823

Seniors Crime Stoppers
1-800-222-8477
crimestoppershamilton.com/for-seniors

Seniors Safety Line
1-866-299-1011
eapon.ca

Frauds and Scams

Fraud is the number one crime against older Canadians. Every year, Canadians lose millions of dollars to the activities of scammers through online, mail, door-to-door and telephone scams.

Common types of frauds and scams include:

- Identity theft
- Credit/debit card fraud
- Tax scams
- Immigration scams
- Prize scams
- Online scams
- Border service scams
- Threats to send money right away to avoid legal action

If it sounds too good to be true it probably is. Just say NO.

What to Do if You Have Been Scammed

All fraud and scams should be reported, even if there may be embarrassment or if one may think the amount of money is too small to worry about.

Report suspicious offers to the police immediately before the suspect finds other victims. Take a mental note of what the suspect looks like, what they sounded like, the phone number they called from and other details from the conversation if possible.

Report All Scams To

Better Business Bureau
1-800-459-8875

Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre
1-888-495-8501
antifraudcentre.ca

Consumer Protection Ontario
1-800-889-9768

Crime Stoppers
1-800-222-8477

**Seniors Support Services
Hamilton Police Service**
905-546-4925



Tips and Safeguards

- “Buyer Beware” and “You do not get something for nothing”
- Be suspicious and cautious when receiving unexpected phone calls, text messages or emails that request personal information
- Never turn over large amounts of cash to anyone no matter how urgent the matter
- Never give out one’s social insurance number, address, credit card, bank account or personal information to anyone over the phone, at the door, or over the internet
- Never tell anyone the PIN or account passwords when using a bank or credit union machine
- Do not sign an agreement or contract to buy anything without giving time to think it over. Check with family or friends
- Do not rush into any agreement that involves one’s property or finances
- Before hiring someone or agreeing to have work done at home, ask for proof of identity and references and check them. Have family members or trusted friends or legal representatives review all contracts and references

(4)(5)

Lost or Stolen Wallet

What To Do If You Lose Your Wallet or If Your Wallet Is Stolen

- Make a list of wallet contents and other important personal information and keep them in a safe and secure place
- All lost or stolen identification - should be reported to the police on the non-emergency line as soon as possible at:
HPS: 905-546-4925
- All lost or stolen credit cards - notify one’s credit card company to cancel the card
- All lost, stolen bank or credit union cards - notify one’s bank or credit union to cancel the card and to ask for a replacement
- Note: Make sure to change one’s PIN number

Where to go to Replace Identification Papers

**Hamilton Urban Core
Community Health Centre**

905-522-3233

**Service Canada – Hamilton
(SIN, passport, Citizenship)**

1-800-622-6232

**Service Ontario
(Health card, Driver’s license, photo ID)**

1-800-267-8097

Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions/Disabilities

Although there is no consistent term to describe chronic health conditions, it is generally accepted that the term is used to refer to any health condition, disorder, disability, illness, or syndrome that is experienced over an extended period of time and is not considered temporary in nature. Chronic diseases usually develop slowly, last a long time, and are often progressive and incurable. For many chronic diseases, there is no cure.

Chronic diseases and conditions are the leading cause of death and disability in Ontario. The most common are cancers; cardiovascular disease such as heart disease, heart failure and stroke; chronic respiratory diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD); asthma; and diabetes. (6)

Others include but are not limited to hypertension (high blood pressure); high cholesterol; musculoskeletal disorders such as arthritis and osteoporosis; chronic kidney disease (CKD); mental illness, depression and other mood disorders, anxiety and suicide;

neurological diseases (alzheimer's disease, parkinson's disease and dementia); inflammatory bowel diseases such as colitis and crohn's disease; periodontal (mouth and teeth) disease; epilepsy; fibromyalgia; HIV/AIDS; obesity; and traumatic brain injury/post-concussive syndrome. (7)

Disabilities can encompass physical, psychosocial, mental and emotional conditions and can be both visible and invisible (hidden). There are many different types of disabilities, such as those that affect a person's vision, movement, thinking, remembering, learning, communicating, hearing, mental health and ability to have social relationships.

Both chronic conditions and disabilities are extremely diverse. While some health conditions associated with disability result in poor health and extensive healthcare needs, others do not. However, all people with chronic conditions and/or disabilities have the same general healthcare needs as everyone else, and therefore, need access to healthcare services. (8)(9)

Managing Chronic Health Diseases/ Conditions and Disabilities During COVID-19

People with chronic conditions and disabilities have been disproportionately affected during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of the large numbers of older adults with health care issues that can be chronic and/or disabling, their experiences with COVID-19 may have been and can continue to be especially challenging.

Older adults with chronic conditions or disabilities need health care and health programs for the same reasons anyone else does—to stay well, active, and a part of the community. This means having the tools and information to make healthy choices and knowing how to prevent illness.

Tips for Leading a Long and Healthy Life:

- Be physically active every day. Activity has been shown to reduce pain, assist with sleep, help relieve stress and improve depression. This can involve doing regular activities around the home such as gardening or house cleaning. It can also include more structured programs and classes such as those offered in the community. For example YWCA Hamilton operates two 55+ Active Living Centres visit: ywcahamilton.org for more information
- Eat healthy foods in healthy portions. Canada's Food Guide provides sound advice about food nutrition, food choices, eating habits and recipes. For more information visit: food-guide.canada.ca (10)
- Don't get too much sun. Learn about skin cancer and choose strategies to reduce the risk of cancer such as using lotions that provide barriers to sun rays and wearing clothing that covers the skin when outdoors
- Develop good sleep hygiene. Sleep is important for overall health and well-being,

including cognitive, emotional well-being and physical health. Sleep disturbances such as sleep apnea, insomnia, fragmented sleep and early awakening are common in older adults. Sleep quality can be improved by having healthy sleep habits, including having regular meals and exercise, avoiding caffeine, nicotine and alcohol before bedtime, and reducing noise and light in the sleeping environment. Establish a routine and try to get between 7 and 8 hours of sleep a night

- Get regular checkups. Learn what health services and screenings may be important to one's health
- Don't smoke. If so, consider how one might reduce or eliminate smoking. Avoid second-hand smoke
- Use medicines wisely. Learn about medication safety. Speak to a pharmacist about medication – intended benefits, side effects and interactions
- If drinking alcoholic beverages, drink in moderation
- Seek support for substance abuse
- Stay in touch with family and friends. Social isolation is associated with poor physical and mental health, including increased emotional distress and prevalence of depression, increased number of falls and use of health and support services, and premature death
- Need help? Talk with a healthcare professional

(11)



Continuing to Move Forward

I am a disabled 68-year-old female with several chronic health challenges. In the summer of 2012, I fell down a flight of stairs in the middle of the night. As a result, I suffered a broken shoulder bone and broken upper arm bone. I also had a concussion, the cause of my traumatic brain injury (TBI). It seemed like overnight my life changed dramatically. Not only did I experience changes in my physical abilities (some because of bones broken in the fall, others as a result of the brain injury), I was also unable to perform some of the higher-level cognitive skills necessary for my role. I had damaged the part of my brain responsible for these skills. It is no wonder that I also experienced a blow to my sense of self, self-image, and self-confidence. No longer was I able to fulfill my responsibilities as a faculty member in the School of Nursing at McMaster.

My status changed from being a full-time faculty member, to an individual on long-term disability. I was 59 when I fell. When I turned 65, I had to retire. I had not planned on this; I loved my work, I gained a great deal of satisfaction from it, and wanted to work until I was 70 or 75 years old.

As I struggled through rehabilitation, I had to learn several coping strategies to deal with the losses I was experiencing because of my TBI. These strategies were very beneficial when the restrictions due to COVID-19 were imposed. The pandemic, the lockdowns, and the implications on the activities I had taken for granted, such as going to the gym, visiting the library, shopping for groceries and clothing, going to shows and getting my hair done. The pandemic caused me to revisit all the questions I had earlier faced

about how to survive, how to manage my regular activities in life, and how to move on in the face of opposition. Whereas previously, the mountain to climb was primarily my TBI - then in March of 2020, COVID-19 hit.

One of the most beneficial strategies was to expand my knowledge about technologies, especially various computer communication programs. I now regularly use the computer to consult with my health care providers, engage in programs offered through the YWCA and Parkinson's Canada, and maintain my connections with family and friends. I began asking for help. Something that is not easy for me to do. I now seek and welcome support from professionals, family and friends. I discovered that I could reinvent myself and that my sense of value

could be fostered through volunteering. I volunteer at the YWCA in Hamilton and the Dr. Bob Kemp Hospice. I participate on several committees, focusing on those that support and enable seniors.

What have my experiences with both my TBI and COVID-19 taught me? I continue to value the life philosophy learned from my grandmother: that regardless of the experiences that life hands you, choose to be positive, make the best of the situation, and move forward. I learned that resilience, perseverance and self-confidence in the face of uncertainty are important characteristics to foster.

Program participant, age 68

Dementia Care

The Alzheimer Society of Canada indicates there are more than 500,000 Canadians living with dementia today and this number will almost double by 2030. It has been estimated 255,000 people are currently living with dementia in Ontario and approximately 12,000 people are living with dementia in Hamilton and Haldimand.

The Empowering Dementia-Friendly Communities Hamilton, Haldimand project speaks to the challenges and barriers experienced by people living with dementia to participating in community life. A summary of the consultation is available in a report on the website coahamilton.ca "What We Heard, June 2021" (12). This report recognizes the following five themes identified by persons affected by dementia in how our communities can become more dementia-friendly:

1. Empowering people living with dementia.
2. Challenging stigma and building understanding.

3. Fostering social inclusion and participation.
4. Creating dementia-inclusive-built environments and transportation.
5. Improving community responsiveness to crisis/COVID 19.

To find out more about dementia and the recommendations in the "What We Heard Report" visit the Hamilton Council on Aging website at coahamilton.ca.

Additional Resources

Dementia-Resources

905-667-4867
hamiltonfht.ca/en/index.aspx

Regular education Zoom sessions on topics relevant for people with dementia:

igericare.healthhq.ca

Navigating Long-Term Care and Home Care Services

Home and Community Care

Support Services of Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant (HCCSSHNHB)

HCCSSHNHB is one of 14 Community Care Support Centres in communities across Ontario. They provide care to about 80,000 people every year, including Hamilton, Niagara, Haldimand-Norfolk, and Brant, and are funded through the Local Health Integration Network, by the Government of Ontario (Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care). The staff at the HCCSSHNHB help people to stay at home, avoid staying in the hospital, get support when they leave the hospital, and explore their options for long-term care. There is no cost; the care provided is free of charge with a valid Ontario Health Card, services funded by The Government of Ontario.

For more information, visit the website: healthcareathome.ca/hnhb or call the toll-free number **1-800-810-0000**.

How to Start:

Call the HCCSSHNBN at **1-800-810-0000** to arrange a visit with a care coordinator. A care coordinator is a knowledgeable health professional who knows the community well.

A care coordinator will work to:

- Assess needs for care
- Assess the resources available to help
- Explore options for care. The care coordinator will give individual's information and support, so that decisions are made to support what's right for them

Options for Care

- 1. Care in Home:** The HCCSS care coordinator will help support one to stay at home for as long as possible by exploring all options for continued home support and services. The coordinator works with individuals to decide on specific needs based on what one's capabilities are and where one may need assistance. HCCSS can connect people with services such as adult day programs, meal programs and friendly visiting. HCCSS can also provide home care services that may include: nursing care, personal support to help with bathing and dressing, nutrition and diet support, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and social work support/counselling.
- 2. Care in Community:** If one requires more help than what is available at home, the care coordinator can help find other options. Consider the places in one's community where the individual's needs could be better met, such as, a retirement home, short-stay or respite, or a long-term care home.



Tip: *Speak with someone trusted about one's care wishes. If one requires help making decisions, assigning a "Power of Attorney" could be considered. This gives the person the right to make decisions on the individual's behalf if they become incapable of making choices for themselves.*

Retirement Homes

Retirement homes are privately owned and operated. Residents pay for their accommodation, care and services. A retirement home is a good choice if one can live independently with minimal support. It is suggested to visit the retirement homes in one's area to find what may be right for the individual. Meet with the manager of the retirement home to discuss needs and the costs, before signing the rental agreement. The HCCSS is not involved with choosing or renting retirement homes. However, they can provide a list of homes in one's community. Some who live in a

retirement home, may be eligible for some of the HCCSS services. HCCSS can help with the application process for long-term care homes.

Short-Stay or Respite Short-Stay

is available when one needs care for a short time. This is also called respite care. Individuals may need respite care when caregivers are on vacation, need a rest, or when one is recovering from an illness or surgery. Care coordinators may plan respite care at home or in the community (for example, a brief stay in a long-term care home).

Long-Term Care Homes

can provide more care and support than what is available in a retirement home. They are designed for people who need nurses available 24 hours a day, or require care in a safe setting. A long-term care home is a good choice if it has become too much of a challenge (for the individual or their caregiver) to stay in one's home, or home care and community support services are no longer enough to meet the needs of the individual. Long-term care homes are regulated by the Ministry of Health Long-Term Care. The government pays the costs of care, while individual's pay for accommodation. The cost for a basic, semi-private or private room is set by the Ministry. Care coordinators go over these costs with residents. If an individual does not have enough income to pay for a basic room, the government can offer financial help. An individual can apply for a subsidy to reduce the amount required to pay. This is called a rate reduction.

Applying for Long-Term Care

The time to apply for long-term care will depend on needs and the help available. Individuals may want to explore the option of a long-term care home with a care coordinator when there is a need for a lot of personal support or nursing care, the family caregivers are no longer able

to provide care, when people are unable to return home after being in the hospital, or care needs are greater than what can be provided by services in the community. The decision to apply for long-term care is a personal choice for everyone. HCCSS staff can determine an individual's needs for care, if one is eligible for a long-term care home, and assist in applying to long-term care homes in Ontario.

6 Steps to Applying for Long Term Care Homes

- 1. Learn About the Options:** It is recommended individuals choose up to five long-term care homes. If a situation is urgent, make as many choices as possible. Think about priorities. What matters the most?

Consider issues such as:

- The care and service available
- The location and how easy it is to get there
- The type of room one can afford (basic, semi-private or private)
- The other programs and overall atmosphere

- 2. Visit Long-Term Care Homes:** The best way to know if a home is right for an individual is to call the long-term care home(s) and arrange a visit. Visit all the homes that may be considered. The care coordinator can help determine which homes are best able to meet the individual's needs. It is important to visit homes ahead of time, so one is ready to make a decision when a bed becomes available.

Continued on next page...

3. Complete the Application: A care coordinator will work closely with individuals to determine needs and complete the application. The HCCSS staff may ask for help to:

- Get a completed Health Report from one's family doctor to ensure records are up-to-date
- Ensure the information on one's application for the long-term care homes of one's choice is current within 3 months

4. Accepting the Application: The HCCSS will share information from the application with the long-term care homes chosen. If a long-term care home can meet one's care needs, the application will be accepted. Individual's will be put on their waiting list until a bed becomes available. The care coordinator can discuss the average wait times for the homes that have chosen.

5. Waiting for a Bed to Become Available: A bed may become available at any time, so please make sure the HCCSS has the right phone number to reach the individual or their caregiver. It may take some time before a bed is available. Waiting can be stressful for individual's and their caregivers. The care coordinator can help with questions or concerns while waiting. The waiting period may be days, months or longer. Wait times can depend on health care needs, the number of homes chosen, the number of beds available in the home, the type of rooms available - basic, semi-private or private, and whether available rooms are for men or women. If one is in the hospital waiting for a bed, staff may ask individuals or their caregivers to consider long-term care choices that have shorter waiting lists. This may allow one to move sooner to a place that can provide the type of care they need.

Once there, one can remain on a waitlist for the home of their choice and move to their preferred home when a bed becomes available.



Tip: A long-term care home may give an individual's application higher priority if one has experienced a crisis and the situation is urgent, or has care needs and is joining a spouse or partner already living in long-term care. If one has special needs related to ethnic or cultural background, applications may be given special consideration by a long-term care home that can meet those needs.

6. Responding to the Bed Offer: The HCCSS will call when a bed that matches one's needs becomes available. Individual's will have 24 hours to accept or refuse the offer (based on Government regulations). During this time, one can speak with family or caregivers about this decision. If individuals choose to accept the bed offer, it is expected that they move in as early as the next day or within five days. If one is waiting at home for a long-term care home, the bed may be held for up to five days. Individuals must move into the home within 5 days or they will lose the bed. The long-term care home will begin charging accommodation fees as soon as the offer is accepted. If the bed offered is not the first choice, one may move in and keep their name on the waiting lists for the other choices. If one chooses to refuse the bed offer, applications to all long-term care homes will be closed and one may reapply in 12 weeks, or sooner if their condition or situation changes.

Plan Ahead for the Move

Before moving to a long-term care home:

- Have money set aside to pay for the first month's accommodation and other services, such as cable TV or hairdressing
- If possible, go to the home and sign the contract as soon as the bed offer is accepted
- Have copies of one's Power of Attorney forms available
- Decide what items are to be brought to the new home. Check with the staff to see if one can bring any furniture
- Label all personal items, including clothes, glasses, hearing aid, dentures, cane, walker or wheelchair (13)

905-523-8600

Toll Free:1-800-810-0000

healthcareathome.ca/hnhb

Home Care

In-home services available through Home and Community Care Support Services organizations are made up of:

1. Health Care Professionals

Individuals can arrange to have health professionals visit in one's home. They can assess the individuals needs, provide care or help to care for one by providing:

2. Personal Care

- Nursing care – including help to take medications, change bandages and clean wounds, recover from an injury or health problem, checking health, and creating a care plan
- Physiotherapy – including help for back pain, mobility problems, blood circulation, and pain relief and relaxation

- Occupational therapy – including help to make day-to-day activities easier and make it easier to move around in one's home
- Speech-language therapy – including stroke recovery for an individual who has difficulty speaking or understanding speech
- Social work – including help for caregivers to cope and manage stress, and help for families to address conflicts
- Healthy eating – including help to assess eating habits and create a healthy eating plan
- Home healthcare supplies – including dressings, walking aids, braces, and cushions

Arranging for health care professionals to help with daily care or help for one to safely manage these activities on their own. They can help with:

- Washing and bathing
- Mouth care
- Hair care
- Preventative skin care
- Routine hand or foot care
- Getting in and out of chairs, vehicles or beds
- Dressing and undressing
- Eating
- Toileting
- Appointments

3. Homemaking

To help maintain a safe and comfortable home, homemaking services can assist with routine household activities including:

- Housecleaning
- Doing laundry
- Shopping
- Banking
- Paying bills
- Planning menus
- Preparing menus
- Caring for children

4. Family-Managed Home Care/Self-Directed Care

For greater flexibility and choice, if one is eligible for services through Home and Community Care Supports Services organization, the individual may be eligible to receive funding directly to pay for home care services. One is responsible for the related administrative tasks, such as finding, hiring and paying service providers, but the individual will also have the freedom to choose the provider, direct how they provide care and set the schedule. This program is available for the following people with home care needs:

- Children with complex medical needs
- Adults with an acquired brain injury
- Home-schooled children with qualifying health care needs
- Those in extraordinary circumstances

Contact the local Home and Community Care Support Services organization to find out if one is eligible and for more information on how this program works.

5. End-of-Life Care at Home

If one requires end-of-life care at home, there are many programs in Ontario that can help. Individuals can request: Some communities or long-term care homes may offer classes.

- Nursing and personal care
- Medical supplies, including low-cost medication for older adults through the Ontario Drug Benefit Plan
- Tests
- Hospital and sickroom equipment
- Transportation to other health services
- Help to manage pain
- Home hospice services – including in-home visits and respite care by trained volunteers

How Make a Complaint

To report harm, neglect or other complaints about home care in Ontario, call the Long-term Care ACTION Line:

Toll-free: 1-866-434-0144

Hours of operation:
8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., 7 days a week

Learn more: complaint process at
ontario.ca/page/long-term-care-home-complaint-process

Updated: April 1, 2021 Published:
September 4, 2014

For additional resources please visit: ontario.ca to learn the differences between long-term care options, find a long-term care home, and financial assistance. (14)



End-of-Life Planning

Preparing for end-of-life planning can be difficult to think about, yet planning for it does not need to be frightening. Having plans in place can make the transition easier for loved ones. Not only is the division of assets important, but knowing an individual's choice for end-of-life care can ensure one's wishes are met, for example, planning for the funeral and burial arrangements. Below are some tips and resources on how to go about making that plan.

1. Prepare end-of-life planning documents.
2. Prepare a Will or Trust.
3. Appoint Power of Attorney.
4. Make a list of assets.
5. Determine end-of-life housing plan:
 - Long-term care home
 - Nursing home
 - Home care
 - Palliative care
 - Other

6. Write down final wishes, including funeral plans and burial arrangements.
7. Create an obituary and/or death notice.
8. Create a contact list as to who should be contacted regarding one's death.

Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID)

Doctors and nurse practitioners in Ontario can provide medical assistance in dying [MAID].

The doctor or nurse practitioner must take all necessary measures to make sure the individual understands their options when considering MAID services.

If one's doctor or nurse practitioner does not want to provide MAID services for reasons of religion or conscience they must refer individuals in a timely manner to another doctor or nurse practitioner.

Care Coordination Service

Contact the Care Coordination Service for assistance and advice on MAID services in Ontario.

The Care Coordination Service can connect individuals with a doctor or nurse practitioner who provides MAID services.

The Care Coordination Service can be reached at **1-866-286-4023** or TTY: **1-844-953-3350** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Eligibility Requirements

- Have a current Ontario Health Card
- Be 18 years of age or older
- Be capable of making health care decisions
- Be able to provide informed consent
- Voluntarily request MAID services
- Have a grievous and irremediable medical condition which means one has:
 - Serious and incurable illness, disease or disability
 - Are in an advanced state of irreversible decline in capacity
 - Enduring physical or psychological suffering, caused by the medical conditions or the state of decline, that is intolerable and cannot be relieved

How To Receive Assistance

1. Make a written request to receive MAID services.
2. The written request must be witnessed, signed and dated by one independent witness.
3. Submit the written request to one's physician or nurse practitioner.

4. The doctor or nurse practitioner will determine if the individual meets all the eligibility requirements. If so, a second doctor or nurse practitioner must complete another assessment.
5. The law requires a patient to provide their consent to medical assistance in dying immediately before it is provided.

Withdraw A Request For MAID Services

A patient can withdraw their request for MAID services at any time. (15)

Additional Information:

Hamilton Family Health Team

905-667-4848
hamiltonfht.ca

Dying With Dignity Canada

416-486-3998
info@dyingwithdignity.ca

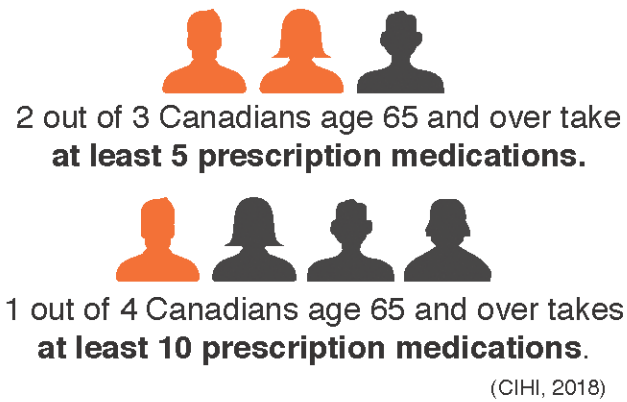
Health Canada's MAID

canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/medical-assistance-dying.html

Speak Up Canada

advancecareplanning.ca

Are older Canadians taking too many meds?






What is deprescribing?

When too many medications are taken, deprescribing is a solution. Deprescribing means reducing or stopping medications that may not be beneficial or may be causing harm.

The goal of deprescribing is to maintain or improve quality of life.


Why deprescribe?

Taking medications may be necessary for health, improving symptoms or prolonging life. However:


- **Things change**
As we age, medications affect us differently. Medications that were good then, may not be the best choice now.
 - **Medication may cause harm**
The risk of harmful effects and hospitalizations increases when taking multiple medications.
 - **Seniors are more at risk**
They are hospitalized five times more often than people under age 65 because of harmful medication effects.
- (CIHI, 2013)


Risky meds are good candidates for deprescribing




- **Medications are considered risky** when the harms outweigh the benefits, and safer drug or non-drug therapy can be used to treat the same condition.
- **Older women** are typically more susceptible to harmful effects of medications and more likely to be prescribed risky meds.

 Always check with your doctor, pharmacist or nurse before changing or stopping any of your medications.

What can you do?

 **Start a conversation** with your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. Here are some questions you can ask about your medications:

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1. Why am I taking this medication?
 2. What are the potential benefits and harms of this medication?
 3. Can it affect my memory or cause me to fall?
 4. Can I stop or reduce the dose of this medication (i.e. deprescribing)?
 5. Who do I follow-up with and when?


-  **Inform yourself** about your medications and why you are taking them.
-  **Keep a list:** ask your pharmacist for a list of all your medications. Keep an updated medication list on you and on your fridge.
-  **Spread the word** about deprescribing to friends and family, advocacy groups and government representatives.
-  **Download information** on deprescribing: deprescribingnetwork.ca/useful-resources

What is the Canadian Deprescribing Network (CaDeN)?

CaDeN is a group of health care leaders, academic researchers and patient advocates working together to promote safe medication use across Canada.

CaDeN's goals are to:

- **Reduce harm** by raising awareness and decreasing the use of risky prescriptions among seniors.
- **Promote health** by ensuring access to safer drug and non-drug therapies.

 Learn more about deprescribing and medication safety on CaDeN's website: deprescribingnetwork.ca

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“ The Spirit of Volunteering

It is important to highlight older adults in the community and their experiences during COVID-19, as well as share how to combat the challenges faced and the lessons learned.

I am in my 90s. I live alone with no children around. One of the most challenging things I face every day is that my English is very poor and it is difficult to communicate with local English-speaking people. Because of the language barrier, there is a lack of understanding of what is happening in society, like the COVID-19 news and its policies, etc. I also have mobility issues making it a challenge for me to see a doctor, taking public transportation, grocery and daily necessities shopping, etc. It is now even more difficult when going out and we are subject to certain restrictions during the pandemic.

At the beginning of the pandemic, I was at a loss and didn't know how to face it. Fortunately, a Catholic Family Services (CFS) worker organized online workshops for us, from updating

pandemic news, arranging food deliveries, to applying for seniors benefits and helping with various paperwork.

Staff from Health Services and Urban Core also offered online services, helping us to understand the pandemic, holding health sessions, accessing the COVID-19 screening and vaccination centers, etc.

The above agencies have given us immense help so we can go through this difficult time smoothly. I am very grateful to them.

I would like to share some of my personal experiences during the pandemic:

I learned how to participate in online meetings and simple internet communications. I am so thankful to all my neighbours and friends for their mutual help. During the pandemic, we are like a big family. Through online communications, we support and encourage each other to go through these difficult times together.

I am especially grateful to the volunteers for their help. A year ago in May, I had a severe migraine and blurred vision. I thought it was an eye issue. During that time there was a stay-at-home policy in place and I didn't know what to do. I called Public Health and a volunteer was sent to me. They immediately drove me to the family doctor, and then to the St. Joseph Hospital's emergency department. After being checked by multiple doctors and a CT scan, I was in the ER for 13 hours. It was preliminarily diagnosed as herpes zoster in the eye that had affected the optic nerve, causing the eyes to be unable to rotate and focus. Immediately afterwards, the volunteer took me to the eye hospital for a consultation and treatment by an ophthalmologist. While there, an MRI examination was performed to rule out the possibility of a brain tumor. After months of multiple treatments and follow-ups, my front vision ranged from one to two meters to about ten meters in six months. It took another year to gradually return to normal. For more than a year,

especially in the first three months, I can't remember how many hospital visits I had. That same volunteer worked tirelessly to drive me back and forth, helping book appointments, and acting as an interpreter for me. They worked so hard that sometimes they were too busy to eat. They were eager to help me even without getting paid and also paid for parking. Without their help, I can't imagine what I would do. In addition, during the hardest and most difficult time in my life, friends and neighbours all reached out to me. They brought me hot food and other supplies when I was unable to do it myself. My experiences of recovering made me feel that the world is full of love. Staff, volunteers, neighbours and friends, I appreciate all your selfless and enthusiastic help.

Program participant, age undisclosed



Positive Momentum

March 13, 2020 ended my career; I had planned to retire in three years not that year. I was heartbroken. COVID-19 forced home time, allowing me to review life and make needed changes to navigate retirement. I decided to move to an amazing retirement village in Glancaster near my grandchildren, do an online writing course on memoirs which led to my first paid published story and weeks of babysitting grandchildren. It's time we never would have had. I was lucky to keep volunteering virtually on Zoom with Blooms Grandmothers for Africa, Royal Botanical Gardens and ARM District 21. Mondays were a Zoom ukulele group that played and sang for two hours. In the village a Zoom newcomers' group had allowed for wonderful new friendships to bloom. Face time with my daughter who is in Newfoundland was so helpful. Long conversations with great friends threaded me through the isolation. I know I used to shop and spend unnecessarily before and now know how stopping this habit gives me more money to spend better. I clearly see my many blessings - to be well, have family and friends and community. I know as a drama teacher I can improvise, adapt and reach out and get through tough times. COVID sure wasn't all roses but I managed the thorns.

Program participant, age undisclosed



The Possibilities of Tomorrow

I felt particularly impacted by COVID-19 because of the decisions made just prior to it being declared a pandemic. I decided to sell my house and move to an apartment early in 2020. The house sold within three days while I was still out of the country visiting my family in Virginia. Upon my return, I found that packing up and moving to a smaller place while donation centres were closed and extra storage space had to be found was very stressful. Seasonal Affective Disorder and years of dealing with depression made things worse. Shopping for groceries was a chore to be accomplished only once a week, if possible. My only outside contact was a weekly visit with my daughter and son-in-law. Since they are both teachers and were in a school setting for part of the time that was an extra stress. My relationships were impacted with friendships strained even to this day.

I am now double vaccinated but find that I am still anxious about going out and will "save up" chores so that I can do multiple tasks on a 'go out' day.

Today is a lovely sunny day, temperatures are pleasant, and I have struggled to get myself together to pick up a prescription from the drugstore and pick up some groceries. I don't think I can do it today. Will try again tomorrow.

Program participant, age 83



Embracing the Quiet

Turns out that from the beginning I was fine with staying home and doing little. It was like a rest, in a way, a forced suspension of activities. So, I was okay with it for a while, but got into some bad habits. Too much TV, too much lying around, too much food. Easier to control snacking and mealtimes when you're not at home 24 hours a day. Food becomes a diversion from boredom. Gained weight but continued to eat anyway.

I am fully aware of the things I needed to do around the house. For the most part, I only did the things I had to do and didn't take on anything extra. I don't feel particularly guilty, but the reality remains that I squandered a lot of time that could have been put to more productive use. It is probably fair to say that I envy those who had enough ambition to tackle projects and complete them, I did not. I discovered that I enjoyed my reading time, my TV time with my 20-year-old Annie cat, who loved the extra attention. I can't really say I missed the weekly socializing. I enjoyed my quiet time. I might even take a month each year to stay home and stay quiet and just do little things I like to do, by myself.

As I get older, health issues are a factor, as well. Chasing dust seems to me a losing proposition. It occurred to me that with the years I have left, I might want to spend less of my time chasing

ubiquitous dust so I now have a very nice young woman who cleans my floors. Perhaps I have had more time for introspection, because I have decided that the things I actually enjoy doing, have to take centre stage. While I still have a cadre of chores, I try to do them in a timely and responsible manner, they are certainly not a focal point of my life. It is no wonder that the years seem to pass more quickly as we age. We are often trying to do everything even as we are retired from a regular working routine. Even thinking about "everything" can be exhausting. Because there is so much to think about, so many thoughts that clutter our consciousness. It's no wonder that we need "time out" with few or no responsibility. I am reminded that many decades ago, meditation used to be popular. Many people still swear by it. Perhaps that will be one of my new pastimes. I won't call it an activity.

Program participant, age 74



Our New Realities

COVID-19 has changed the way in which I shop. Due to mobility issues, I have challenges standing for long periods of time. Prior to the pandemic I would often sit at a bench in the supermarket and take a rest. I now rely on my walker, should I need to sit down, but find that it can be uncomfortable to sit on for too long. Also, washrooms were often closed to the public in stores that I visited. That said, COVID-19 affected the amount of time I spent in stores because I could not access the bathroom or sit down on a bench. This affected how often I could do my shopping.

Another way COVID-19 affected me personally was that my daughter's wedding was deferred.

My daughter gave me the phone number to call and book an appointment for my vaccine. When I was able to book an appointment I took a cab to get my vaccine.

COVID-19 has reminded me how important it is that we work together. Moving out of the pandemic, I hope we remember that we all play a part in how we improve or affect our day-to-day lives.

Program participant, age 72



A Time of Adaptation

I found that COVID-19 impacted my ability to socialize with people in-person. I have a close friend who would visit me weekly, but when we were told by the government to remain home, my friend stopped visiting. We still talked on the phone, but I found it wasn't the same as when he would visit me. When COVID-19 was at its peak, the only human interaction I would have would be when my daily meals were dropped off.

I wouldn't have an issue accessing a vaccine clinic. My friend still drives and has taken me to any appointments that I had in the past.

Because we were limited to how close we could be to one another, some services were either cancelled temporarily or discontinued. I am visually impaired and use a cane or walker to get around. I appreciated that my doctor, who I hadn't seen in years, spoke with me over the phone and assessed my ability to access ServiceOntario. My doctor filled out a form that allowed someone to renew my health card on my behalf. Being able to access my doctor over the phone was a big help for me. I hope that this pandemic has taught us to find innovative and creative ways to deliver services while abiding by safety protocols.

Program participant, age 74



A Time for Reflection

When I reflect on how COVID-19 has affected my life, I have very little to complain about. My finances were not affected, no depression, no anxiety or any other mental health issues – even my social life continued through Google chat, Skype and Zoom. Social distance meetings with the wee ones (once allowed) were regular. In short, I realized how fortunate I was!

So, I began to reflect on those who were not as fortunate. I watched as people were physically removed from homeless camps. The demands for food banks increased, and I saw how COVID-19 was affecting the mental health of people of all ages, the lack of affordable housing in our community, and the impact on long-term care facilities and their residents... and so much more. It wasn't that I was not aware of any of these social issues prior to COVID-19, it's just that I had much more time to reflect and respond to them.

I increased my donations to the food bank. I always carry loose change to give to a homeless person when I encounter one. I now volunteer at two agencies that provide for the less fortunate. I contact my city Councillor or M.L.A. or M.P. to voice my concerns. It doesn't make me 'special'. It does make me a more aware and responsible citizen.

In short, I realized how we must be responsible for how our city, province and country grows and develops and takes care of all its citizens.

Program participant, age 68

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