

Seniors' Independence and Participation



United Way
of the Lower Mainland

Within the next 10 years, seniors will outnumber children in most Lower Mainland communities. By 2021, the seniors population will have almost doubled, reaching 494,000. By 2031, about one in four people in the region will be 65 years of age or older.

United Way of the Lower Mainland is responding to the challenges and seizing the opportunities the 'graying of society' presents to all of us.

United Way's commitment to seniors

Our longstanding commitment to older adults is reaffirmed in our new 3-Year Community Impact Plan. Seniors are a top priority for our organization, targeted to receive resources nearing our other priority areas, children 0-6 and children 6-12.

Active aging agenda

With our adoption of the active aging agenda, we recognize supporting seniors' independence and active participation in the community contributes to the health and well-being of seniors and that of the families, neighbourhoods and communities to which they belong.

A community impact organization

The activities of United Way extend beyond fundraising to include the building of capacity and community partnerships and, as a community impact organization, to the creation of durable change in the living conditions of seniors across the region.

To this end, we work collaboratively with stakeholders in the community to co-create a shared action agenda for seniors. Our partners include seniors, seniors' advocacy organizations, service providers, government agencies and researchers.

An age-friendly future

United Way of the Lower Mainland is working towards a future where:

- Communities support the active engagement of all seniors
- Seniors increase their health and wellbeing
- Seniors live independently and age in place
- Seniors participate actively in family and community life
- Seniors exercise their citizenship responsibilities and participate in civic life

Overview of the program ...

1. Grants to community partner organizations

United Way supports the work of community-based service organizations that share our goals of reinforcing seniors' independence and ability to 'age in place' as well as their active participation in community life. Our funds go to programs that provide hot lunches, social and recreational activities, seniors' information and referral services, peer and mentoring support, outreach to isolated seniors, and caregiver and home support.

2. Other grants

In the seniors' area, United Way recently made a one-year only grant of up to \$40,000 available to support programs, services and initiatives that further seniors' independence, their ability to age in place, and participate actively in the community.

The Community Innovations Grant, which will be let soon (tentative deadline of July 13, 2008), is meant to support innovative social programming in (or across) our three priority areas, with a focus on immigrants/newcomers, aboriginals and/or those living in poverty. A one-year grant with a possible one-year extension (based on evaluations), the maximum is \$30,000.

3. Community capacity building

United Way of the Lower Mainland is supporting the formation of seniors-run community planning tables for purposes of addressing the issues confronting older adults in our region, e.g. issues around service co-ordination, affordable housing, transportation, caregiver and home support, and elder abuse. One-year grants of up to \$25,000 are intended to support the operation of eight or nine tables throughout the Lower Mainland, with possible extensions for subsequent years (based on evaluations).

For further information, contact:

Beverley Pitman, PhD
Planning Consultant
United Way of the Lower Mainland
4543 Canada Way, Burnaby, BC V5G 4T4

604-294-8929 ext. 2277
beverleyp@uwlm.ca
website: www.uwlm.ca