

## **Executive Summary**

In 2008, the Services to Seniors Coalition – North Shore (the seniors planning table for the North Shore) undertook a mapping initiative of seniors 85 years and older, where they lived and the programs and services available to them in the North Shore. In the summer of 2009, a second mapping exercise took place, extending the work from 2008 to include seniors 65 to 84.

The Strategic Consulting Partnership of the United Community Services Co-op, who was engaged to analyze the information and trends from the 2008 mapping project, were again contracted to analyze the new Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps, as well as integrate their analysis with their previous work.

The analysis and report was commissioned to inform the Services to Seniors Coalition during its annual planning day in September 2009. This executive summary groups analysis highlights into the three proposed working groups of the Coalition – Advocacy, Education, and Community Development – as a means to present an overview of analysis information in the most practical format.

### **Signposts for the Advocacy Working Group**

- Seniors in certain neighbourhoods, such as Eastview for example, may face multiple barriers such as low income status and lower levels of education, which may require a tailored approach to connect these seniors to relevant services and programs.
- In Metro Vancouver, the North Shore is socio-economically one of the wealthiest communities; this may challenge the belief that there are seniors in the area who meet the criteria for persons and families age 65 and older with low income status. Given that there is in fact a significant number of low income seniors on the North Shore, who may themselves have a psychological barrier of accessing various programs and services targeted at this group, there is a need for advocacy in this area.
- The observed trend that seniors in the North Shore are potentially moving into more accessible neighbourhoods as they age raises some large questions for the entire community. What vision does the North Shore have around housing and also about aging in place? If the movement trend is in fact occurring, is the community vision to accommodate and embrace this trend? If so, how will the municipalities handle the competition for housing in the high density areas as when both seniors and young families compete for the same housing stock? Signposts for the Education Working Group
- From the current mapping analysis, we are able to track some of the concentrations of where seniors live, as well as a possible trend of the movement of seniors as they age, given the 5 different locations of where 85 + seniors and 65 – 74 live. Additional research is required to learn more about whether this concentration is the movement of seniors as they age, is mortality-rate related, or as a result of other factors. A better understanding of this will inform the local health region, provincial health services and others on provisions of emergency services.
- As seniors transition out of work and adjust their lives to retirement, the availability of programs and services (and how they are able to access them) become important, as these habits may not change as they age. The analysis for younger seniors and access/proximity to information, recreational and social services, as well as commercial centres illustrates a growing challenge

with services and hubs specifically below and around the highway while having younger seniors living all across the North. Access and use of these services are key parts of a person's sense of self, sense of independent living, and quality of life.

- Farsi is the most significant language population for seniors 65+ and given that this particular immigrant population is so predominant on the North Shore, targeted efforts in addressing the unique needs of Farsi-speaking seniors would be an effective way to provide significant positive impacts. The nature of the maps also indicate that concentrations of seniors speaking any of the five languages are found all across the North Shore, making concentrating efforts in particular neighbourhoods difficult to gauge and plan for. Signposts for the Community Development Group
- Independent living for seniors is compromised by a lack of access to public transit. In order to stay independent for a longer period of time, accessible public transit becomes increasingly important in the 65 – 84 age range. There are significant number of seniors aged 75 – 84 residing in the Panorama area in the British Properties; many living in single detached houses and are well removed from the transit route buffer. A lack of accessible public transit may also hinder seniors from socializing or participating in their communities.
- Although fewer numbers of seniors 85+ are found in more remote areas, such as Lions Bay or Bowen Island, there are significant concentrations of seniors age 65 to 74 (as high as 66 – 135 seniors) and age 75 to 84 (as high as 26 – 55). Over the coming years, these populations will be aging and the need for programs and services in these areas will likely increase.