

**Online forum part 2**

July 28, 2020

# INTEGRATING MULTICULTURAL SENIORS IN AGE-FRIENDLY NORTH SHORE COMMUNITIES



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Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society

# DEMOGRAPHICS OVERVIEW



- ▶ This short presentation is a recap of a slide show of the demographics given at a forum held in May, 2020. These demographics represent the seniors' immigrant population in BC and the three municipalities on the North Shore. It also focuses on four immigrant populations chosen for a project which multicultural seniors on the North Shore.
- ▶ The full slide presentation can be found on the Lionsview website at [www.lionsviewseniorsplanning.com](http://www.lionsviewseniorsplanning.com)

## DEMOGRAPHICS

## BC SENIOR POPULATION (65+), 2016 CENSUS

	BC immigrant population	Senior population (% of total pop.)	Senior immigrants (% of seniors pop.)
European origin	150,935	19%	45.3%
Asian origin	138,680	17.4%	41.6%
All other origins	43,770	5.5%	13.1%
Total immigrant population	333,385	41.9%	
Total BC senior population	795,415		



# CULTURAL GROUPS

- ▶ Iranian
- ▶ Chinese
- ▶ Korean
- ▶ Filipino

## Demographics rationale

The target multicultural groups for this project were chosen based on the demographic information about the immigrant population of the North Shore obtained from Statistics Canada, 2016. It was noted that seniors from China, Iran, Philippines and South Korea formed a high percentage of the immigrants on the North Shore.

Immigrant Population Aged 65 and Over					
Selected Groups from Canada Census Data 2016					
Place of birth	City of North Vancouver	District of North Vancouver	District of West Vancouver	North Shore Total	% of All Immigrants
Iran	530	810	660	2,000	11.8%
China	210	510	395	1,115	6.6%
Philippines	215	180	55	450	2.7%
Korea	80	125	85	290	1.7%
Selected Total	1,035	1,625	1,195	3,855	22.8%
All other groups	3,110	5,475	4,445	13,030	77.2%
Total All Immigrants 65+	4,145	7,100	5,640	16,885	100.0%
Note: China includes Hong Kong					

**Annwen Loverin,**

Silver Harbour Seniors' Activity Centre

# BARRIERS & PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS FOR NORTH SHORE NEWCOMERS & IMMIGRANT SENIORS' ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES



# SETTING THE CONTEXT

- ▶ Immigrant older adults are increasingly diverse. This is not only due to changes in countries of origin for seniors but also due to the many 'statuses' of immigrant seniors
- ▶ Settlement and integration is a complex process that takes time... and is often connected to life changes/ transitions





# CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY IMMIGRANT SENIORS ON THE NORTH SHORE

- ▶ Varying legal and social service access statuses
  - ▶ Settlement and tasks of daily life in Canada
  - ▶ English Language challenges
  - ▶ Cultural challenges, expectations and changing roles
  - ▶ Dependence on family and sponsorship breakdown issues
  - ▶ Housing/ transportation / 'geographic dispersement'
  - ▶ Poor social ties and bonds
  - ▶ Poor social connections and bridges to mainstream society
  - ▶ Managing health, wellness and frailty
  - ▶ Limited funding for seniors settlement/ESL services = less availability of services
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### MOBILITY:

- Accessing public transportation can be confusing
- Need improvements in outdoor spaces and streets

### CONNECTEDNESS:

- Incentive to integrate?
- Different “Western” ideas about aging and seniors
- Dependence on adult children

### BARRIERS:

- Financial losses
- Cultural isolation
- Lack of integrative programs
- Health care expense
- Lack of English skills
- Lack of ESL classes

## COMMUNITY PROJECT LEARNINGS

More ESL classes  
tailored to seniors  
learning styles

More intercultural  
conversational  
programs

Interpreters for  
accessing  
government  
documents

Intercultural  
gatherings,  
celebrating other's  
cultures

Transportation  
training and built  
environment  
improvements

Specific workshops  
(first language or with  
translation) on various  
topics (health,  
housing, technology,  
volunteering, etc.)

Meaningful  
volunteer  
opportunities in the  
community and  
help finding these

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve collection of data from seniors not connected to services
- Reduce financial barriers to service access
- Develop collaborative model and system of working with newcomer seniors

**Heather Evans,**

City of North Vancouver

# SUMMARY OF SHARON KOEHN'S PRESENTATION: BETWEEN LONELINESS AND BELONGING





# Recent immigrants (in Canada < 5 years) at greater risk

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More likely to experience risk factors identified for all older adults (e.g., higher levels of poverty, lack of awareness of services),



Experience unique challenges, such as lack of charter language (English/French) ability

Two white birds, possibly egrets or herons, are shown in flight against a clear, light blue sky. The bird in the foreground is lower and more to the left, with its wings spread wide. The second bird is positioned higher and further to the right, also in flight. The image is partially cut off on the left side.

# Factors specific to migration that increase risk of social isolation (1)

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- **Language barriers** – not all immigrants can take classes as newcomers due to conflicting responsibilities, but classes are no longer free after 5 years. Few services in origin languages for some minorities, e.g. Korean.
- **Family** – often assumed that immigrant families “take care of their own” but migration (and pre-migration circumstances, e.g. war, unstable employment) can separate families and not all immigrants have children
- **Migration policies** – long period of dependency following sponsorship\*/domestic worker rules limits opportunities



## Factors specific to migration that increase risk of social isolation (2)

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- **Caregiving** – grandchildren (esp. sponsored immigrants) +/- or spousal
- **Lack of awareness of services** – language barriers + unfamiliarity with social structure and variety of services
- **Housing** – location limited by affordability/accessibility – late-life immigrants (esp. sponsored) often have low income, limited choices
- **Transportation** – language + sensory impairment/disability adds to difficulty of getting driving license; language barriers can inhibit transit use



**Community supports**, esp. in own language – includes immigrant serving agencies, multicultural clubs in community centres and religious institutions



**Charter language capability** – classes needed at any stage of migration trajectory



**Subsidized housing** close to community supports and public transit



**Pensions** (prior to end of sponsorship period, now 20 years)

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## What helps?





**Babysitting services** in conjunction with community programs for immigrant older adults



**Low-cost/free culture and language appropriate respite care** for caregivers (volunteers?)



**System navigator** outreach to assist immigrant older adults with finding needed services

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What helps?

The Bus Stop

MOSAIC Seniors Club: Hand in Hand

AMSSA: Challenges Encountered by Immigrant Seniors

A FEW SHORT CLIPS...



- 1) ESL & language learning support
- 2) Celebrating cultures – building intercultural connections
- 3) Informational workshops & services
- 4) Volunteerism & community engagement

## DISCUSSION GROUP TOPICS





- ▶ What are the underlying issues?
- ▶ What is already being done in the community?  
What resources exist?
- ▶ What more could be done?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

