



A Strong Voice For Seniors on the North Shore

The Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society is funded in part by the City of North Vancouver, the Districts of North Vancouver and West Vancouver, the West Vancouver Foundation, the United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Province of British Columbia



Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society has received funding from the West Vancouver Foundation for a project to support the Seniors Working Group which has evolved over the last few years as an indispensable vehicle/tool for organizations working with seniors to collaboratively identify and problem solve major issues for older people on the North Shore. In the last few years SWG dealt with the lingering impacts of COVID, climate change and emergency preparedness. Organizations in the group found the meetings invaluable for sharing resources, collaborating on delivery of programs, and networking on different approaches to dealing these major issues in the interest of vulnerable seniors and the groups that support them.

The SWG's relevancy was corroborated through three surveys. In a 2021 survey of SWG, members were asked if they wished to continue to meet and if they were interested in extending their agenda to include other crucial issues affecting seniors – 90% were in favour of both continuing to meet and extending their agenda to include climate change. A second survey in 2022 and one in 2023 asked if there was sufficient interest to carry on this work and to look at other serious trending issues for seniors such as food security and transportation, and overwhelmingly participants supported the continuation of SWG.

Last year SWG focused somewhat on long COVID and climate change and their impacts on seniors. However, because of the waning impacts of COVID less emphasis was placed on the issue. But, aware of the many impacts of climate change (it has been argued that climate change is disproportionately negatively impacting seniors) the group is committed to working collaboratively on problem solving about these issues including communicating to their members, finding solutions to problems created by the extreme weather, and assisting seniors to become better prepared in an emergency. The committee is committed to extending its reach to work closely with NS Emergency Management and other groups dealing with emergency management/preparedness. Some members of SWG are coordinating several projects to deliver information to hard-to-reach seniors and to organize a collective response in targeted seniors' residences. These projects are regularly discussed at SWG meetings where groups ask for input and resources.

Over the last year, several other issues have come up which claimed SWG's attention. Particularly important was identifying gaps in services for vulnerable, frail, and isolated seniors. To fill the gaps, SWG members are collaborating on a 7-partnership project to provide programs for that group. SWG will also engage in collaborative funding proposals for new funding sources, new United Way funding for seniors to name one source. SWG has also been asked to facilitate discussions about programs in English language learning and social programming for seniors with low level of English (principally Farsi, but also Cantonese, Mandarin, and Korean speaking seniors).