

Proposal for Partnership

Between the Fort Frances Age-Friendly Committee And The Town of Fort Frances Seniors Centre

June 14, 2019 - Submitted by: Sarah-lynn Klassen, on behalf of the FF Age-Friendly Committee

The Fort Frances Age-Friendly Committee would like to propose a partnership with the Fort Frances Seniors Centre (Town of Fort Frances) in the development of a ***Seniors Companion Project***.

The Age-Friendly Committee's Action Plan 2017 – 2020 identified "SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND RECREATION, ISOLATION AND LONELINESS" as one of its priorities. To this end, the committee has focused its efforts into the development of a volunteer based "friendly visiting" program inspired by the existing and successful program model operating at the 55 Plus Centre in Thunder Bay, ON.

The ***Seniors Companion Project*** will be a free community based volunteer service targeted to the senior population in the Fort Frances area.

Its focus will be:

1. To build volunteer capacity among seniors and non-seniors, thereby increasing the participation and wellness of seniors who are volunteering, and helping to bridge the generation gap between seniors and non-seniors.
2. To increase companionship supports to isolated seniors living in the Fort Frances area, thereby reducing loneliness and health decline.

As we see this program having great potential to expand in the future, we have chosen the name carefully. "***Seniors Companion Project***" does not limit it to an in-home friendly visiting service, but allows for the potential to work towards getting isolated seniors out of their homes, increasing their participation in the community and matching seniors with seniors to participate in common interests.

PARTNERSHIPS

We have had preliminary discussions and positive responses from the following community partners and collaborators:

- Fort Frances Volunteer Bureau
- Seniors Centre
- Canadian Mental Health Association Fort Frances Branch
- Riverside Home Support Program and Palliative Care Program
- Safe Communities
- United Nations Friendship Centre
- Metis Council

PROJECT STAGES

1. Project Development (Short Term) March 2019 – March 2020

TASKS:

- Secure grant funding from the Seniors Community Grant Program (Ministry For Seniors And Accessibility, Ontario) for up to \$25,000.
- Hire a Project Coordinator on a contract basis to carry out the following:
 - Develop and implement a “Volunteer 101” type education and recruitment series targeted at seniors and non-seniors.
 - Develop and implement a Project User Survey to collect data identifying need for volunteer services and availability of volunteers (ex. Roster).
 - Plan and design the project procedures (ex. Referral forms, screening tools, volunteer guidelines).
 - Plan and design advertising materials.
 - Design and create a website with the ability to collect referrals and recruit volunteers.

2. Project Operation (Medium Term) March 2020 – September 2021

- Secure grant funding (ex. SEED Grant, Ontario Trillium Foundation, for up to \$75,000) to hire a project coordinator to implement the Seniors Companion Project for a pilot 1 year period.
- Focus project implementation to the following specific services
 - Walk a Bit Program
 - Telephone Assurance Program
 - Friendly Visiting Program
- Collect and analyse the outcome measurements to evaluate success.

3. Project Security (Long Term) September 2021 – September 2025

- Secure expansion funding (ex. GROW Grant, Ontario Trillium Foundation, up to \$250,000 per year for 24-36 months) or permanent funding (ex. Health Ontario, partnership funding between municipal, provincial and federal programs) to operate the program on a longer term basis.
- Expand the project to include the following services
 - Out And About Companion Program
 - Common Interests Program
- Ongoing project evaluation and development.

In order to implement the **Project Development (Short Term) 1st STAGE**, we are seeking partnership with the Town of Fort Frances Seniors Centre to work jointly with us to submit an application to the Seniors Community Grant Program. Sarah-lynn Klassen, Age-Friendly Committee Member, will work closely with the NWHU (as a resource) and the Seniors Centre to complete the grant application. If the grant is approved the Age-Friendly committee will oversee the project and be responsible for submitting the required reporting documents to the Seniors Community Grant Program.

We are asking for the following commitment from the Town of Fort Frances:

1. The TOFF Seniors Centre would be the identified not-for-profit organization on the grant application.
2. The TOFF would provide an In-kind donation of a small office space at the Seniors Centre for an estimated 8 hours per week (desk space and limited locked file space) for the period between Oct 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020.
3. The TOFF would provide the free use of meeting space at the Seniors Centre and at the FF Public Library to host the “Volunteer 101” Series for the period between Oct 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020. The estimated number of public events would be hosted by the project would be 5-8 events.
4. The TOFF would manage the Human Resources requirements to hire a contract Project Coordinator for this short term project.