



St. Aidan's
Society

St. Aidan's Society Senior Outreach Program



2022 Annual Report for: Wood Buffalo Community Foundation

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St. Aidan's Society

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Program Description

St. Aidan's Outreach & Advocate Program exists to improve the quality of life for seniors, to ensure they receive supports appropriate to their needs and to ensure the community is more age friendly and supportive of seniors. We have a number of short term and medium term outcomes that drive our program activities however the work we complete is always with an aim towards increasing quality of life. As leaders in senior service delivery, we create and adapt programming to ensure needs are met and gaps are filled.

St. Aidan's Outreach & Advocate Program theory of change states: if low income, vulnerable and isolated seniors are connected to the needed resources and available supports that enable them to make positive choices, they are much more likely to live healthy, dignified and independent lives while remaining in the community. This theory of change drives our program operations and outcome achievement and we use ongoing analysis of collected data to ensure we are responsive to needs. At our core we are an agency that responds to issues impacting senior safety and security. Our service provision does not change; we ensure seniors have the supports they require for optimal quality of life.

Project Review

As noted in the 2022 annual report, St. Aidan's Society expanded our service provision with our Seniors Health & Wellness program. The Volunteer Program of 2020, continued to grow since inception and the agency maintains a strong volunteer base which is making tremendous impact with the seniors it serves. 2022 also saw the introduction of our new Link Worker. This non clinical position, was created in response to a growing demand for our services and an inability to adequately meet this demand in a timely fashion. Our Outreach Program continued to serve the most vulnerable and at risk older adults through direct clinical service delivery and our Advocate Program continued to focus on macro level initiatives designed to impact the community on a larger scale.

In 2022, the impact of over two years of isolation, loneliness and decreased opportunities for engagement started to become clearer. While we anticipated there would be decline in senior physical health and well-being, the depths of this impact have been beyond what could have been anticipated. Increased numbers of deaths, reports of elder abuse at an all-time high, and the presentation of extremely complex case management issues have made the past few years incredibly challenging. It has been the introduction of the new Link Worker position that has finally allowed us to manage the wait list and enhance our overall impact. Adding a non-clinical position which focuses on system navigation and connection ensures seniors receive initial supports in a timelier fashion. This also allows our team to ensure we align clinical service delivery with clinical service needs. With increased complexity in case management needs, this operational strategy, while new, has proven effective as our team has managed to significantly decrease our waitlist.

Outreach Services: As noted above, our continuum of Outreach services has expanded which enables earlier entry to services and more targeted service differentiating between immediate clinical and non-clinical needs. 2022 saw the completion of 288 assessments and managing 19 reports of elder abuse. Key outputs were 367 home visits, 598 phone calls, 196 brokered referrals and 235 supported referrals. The top 3 intervention focus areas were: Health and Medical (435), Financial (425) and Housing (223) with Transportation (218) and Isolation and Loneliness (213) being close behind. The high numbers in the aforementioned intervention areas reveal that the clients we serve have a multitude of challenging areas of life. The complexity of case management files directly correlates to increased time required by the Outreach Workers and the lower the probability of remaining independent and able to age in community.

*78% of seniors reported an improved capacity to meet needs as a result of the program.

*79% of seniors surveyed reported an improved resilience as a result of the program.

*92% of seniors surveyed reported an increase in social supports available to them as a result of the program.

Volunteer Program: St. Aidan's officially took over the volunteer program September 1, 2020. There were 8 volunteers matched with 9 seniors with 22 seniors on the waitlist. With your support, our program has grown to see over 30 matches and there are currently 4 seniors on the wait list. Our volunteers provided 1036 hours of direct support to seniors in 2022 through 566 in person contacts with seniors including 53 shopping assists, 19 medical appointments, 82 community outings and 173 friendly visits.

*81% of seniors surveyed reported improved social engagement as a result of the program.

*94% of volunteers reported increased meaning and purpose as a result of the program.

*100% of volunteers reported an improved understanding of community social issues as a result of the program.

Age Friendly Education & Awareness: Creating an age friendly community is a long term outcome of our agency. We participate in local, provincial and national advisory groups who focus on the needs of seniors and develop and provide senior related educational opportunities and facilitate and promote campaigns and events to support seniors in the community. We work to educate various organizations and the community at large and strive to make effective changes to systems and practices so they include the older adult lens. In 2022, the St. Aidan's team conducted 8 education and awareness sessions serving 156 participants.

*98% of participants reported an increased understanding of age related issues.

*100% of participants reported increased empathy towards the older adults' population.

Art of Conversation: Since inception, this program has seen 44 Elders and seniors paired with various artists. The inclusion and decreased isolation experienced by seniors has been an impactful outcome of this project. The project also served as a basis for a new program titled Arts In Action. In 2022, artists hosted 12 various workshops for 76 seniors.

*100% of those surveyed reported an increased connection to community as a result of the project.

Health & Wellness Series: This series was introduced in February, 2022 and has been extremely well received and attended with 318 seniors being served through the 18 workshops held. Topics have included such important issues as heart health, mental wellness, estate and funeral planning and loss and grief to name a few.

*81% of seniors reported improved autonomy as a result of the program.

*95% of seniors reported an improved quality of social relationships as a result of the program.

Christmas Support Bags: This important project reaches a number of seniors annually and ensures they have supports needed during a challenging period of time and ensures some connection with many who are shut in. This is a partnership with MacDonald Island, Suncares and Regional Emergency Services. 282 seniors were served in 2022 and 33 volunteers provided 86 hours of volunteer support.

Seniors Week Event: Tailgate Tuesday was created during Covid as a way to provide seniors with a Seniors Week Event while ensuring appropriate social distancing. Although social distancing was not required for 2022, the event had received very positive feedback so it continued in 2022 with 102 seniors attending; including some residents from Willow Square. Salvation Army again partnered with our agency as did the Wood Buffalo Regional Library added life save games such as Connect 4 to the event.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD): “Walk For Awareness: Grow The Conversation”. An education and awareness session was held and seniors, dignitaries and community members gathered to discuss the important issue of elder abuse. 26 participants, aged 2-86 attended and a St. Aidan's staff member attended the Giants ball game that evening, throwing out the first pitch and providing the audience with information on the important issue of elder abuse.

Seniors Assisted Transportation Program: Collaboration with Drive Happiness. Assisting seniors in remaining independent by providing access to affordable transportation. The bookings include 40km and 1.5 hours of support, so drivers are not only providing the transport but also offering time, help and support during those trips; whether it is a medical appointment, shopping trip or attendance at an event, the driver is with the senior the entire time. This important partnership has been a key resource in helping seniors meet medical needs in Edmonton. Combining our multicity resources to meet senior medical needs directly translates to increased senior autonomy and independence.

Senior Fitness Program: This program was created as a response to the decline in physical wellness of seniors, particularly as it relates to functional living skills, during the pandemic. Sadly, the impacts to senior health and wellness is greater than anticipated. Fortunately, partnering with MacDonald Island for a revised and expanded program proved extremely beneficial. St. Aidan's has been able to step back from this program after a period of assisting MacDonald Island. This speaks to successful community capacity building. St. Aidan's goal is to always build capacity and allow community to operate programs such as this. St. Aidan's

and Maclisland have a long history of successful partnership and capacity building as the Walk The Island Program and Carpet Bowling Program were also started by our agency with seed grants and now independently run by Maclisland. As we stepped back from this program, we do not have available data however the first round of the program filled up with 42 seniors and we have been advised all other sessions (6 in total for 2022) were also well received.

Program Budget

The majority of WBCF Funding was designated to staffing and thus there was no change in the budget allocation and no surplus in our WBCF budget.

Please see attached budget template for our year-end financial information.

Program Evaluation

Collecting data will always be a priority for St. Aidan's Society. Ensuring our service delivery is making a significant, positive impact on those we serve, and our community, is critical. Our data collection drives program improvement and development. We are proud to provide our funders and stakeholders with reliable and valid qualitative and quantitative data and work to continually improve our data collection tools. Results of our various data collection is noted throughout this report.

Recognition of WBCF

Throughout the years of WBCF's generous support of St. Aidan's Society, the WBCF was proudly recognized on our agency website, on all grant applications and on all promotional and program materials. We are grateful to the Foundation for their support over the past 4 years. This backing has allowed us to focus on what is important; successfully responding to the needs of the older adult population. We look forward to partnering with the Foundation again in the future.



Al, a senior himself, provides First Aid Training to a group of older adults in one of the Health & Wellness Sessions.



Basanti & Domodar enjoy one of the Arts In Action Workshops. Providing opportunities for social participation and inclusion in community life is a hallmark of Age Friendly Communities.



Age Friendly Trainings are one of St. Aidan's community development initiatives. Angela, of Heritage Village, is participating in a training and learning how to better serve the older adult population while gaining empathy and understanding of age related issues.



Florence (senior) and Talia (volunteer) have been matched through the Volunteer Program. They have enjoyed both visits in the home and community and Florence has enjoyed spending time with Talia's family as well.