



Emergency Support for Seniors Framework

July 2022

By Renfrew-Collingwood Seniors' Society



Acknowledgements

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Glossary

As you read through this report, the names of many organizations and agencies will be abbreviated. Please refer to this page for more information.

ADP or ADC	Adult Day Program or Adult Day Centre
CBSO	Community-Based Seniors' Organizations
CBSS	Community-Based Seniors' Services
COSCO	Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC
COV	City of Vancouver
EMBC	Emergency Management BC
FHA	Fraser Health Authority
LMADC	Lower Mainland Adult Day Care Association
RCSS	Renfrew-Collingwood Seniors' Society
SMART Fund	Sharon Martin Community Health Fund
UWLM	United Way of the Lower Mainland
VEMA	Vancouver Emergency Management Agency
VCH	Vancouver Coastal Health

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Preface

Renfrew-Collingwood Seniors' Society (RCSS) was one of the very few organizations that remained opened every working day throughout the pandemic. Staff agreed to be on-site to strategize the delivery of services, support seniors, redesign programs, and develop an outreach plan. This commitment to the seniors that we serve – 75–100-year-old's -- was beneficial not only for them, but to their caregivers, RCSS staff morale, and the organization.

As RCSS is funded by the City of Vancouver (COV) and SMART Fund for social services grants and Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) for community-based healthcare services, we had access to vital health guidelines and resources. RCSS was able to stay ahead of the curve and tackle the ever-changing requirements and restrictions through proactive planning. This put us in a position where we not only fulfilled our funding requirements but were also able to assist groups and other community-based organizations that did not have access to this essential information. As a serving member on COV's Seniors' Advisory Committee (SAC), the Executive Director's involvement in multiple associations, committees, and task forces enabled our organization to frequently offer insights to city planners and seniors' organizations funded by the city. This community development approach proved to be extremely advantageous for all involved.

Our leadership in the Lower Mainland Adult Day Care Association was also important as there were hundreds of vulnerable seniors that needed our help, and we were able to facilitate and expedite the delivery of resources that were being disseminated. Our outreach, remote program development, activity packages, and documentation methods were adopted by many of our community partners and saved them time and effort in pivoting to a new service model. Most of the systems we developed during the pandemic were adaptable, and when the heat dome hit in June 2021, we already had processes in place to serve our seniors in the community.

BC experienced the highest temperatures ever recorded in June 2021 and 619 of these deaths were later identified as being heat related -- 67% (415) of decedents were 70 years of age or older, and more than half of all decedents (56%) lived alone in the community. The impact of this situation presented an opportunity for RCSS to take a leadership role in emergency preparedness. It was evident that organizations, funders, and policy makers needed to come together to coordinate a better response for future heat-related emergencies. Together with the City's Social Planners, we discussed our desire to bring community groups together, document our experiences, and gather all relevant reports and emergency planning resources in one place, so other organizations would have them at their convenience. A grant was approved, and we went to work. SMART Fund also came to the table with additional one-time funding to enhance the results.

The Executive Summary will give you an overview of the work we achieved and the work that still needs to be done in the form of recommendations. Our hope is to disseminate all the results of our research to like-minded organizations, continue to press for improvements in emergency planning measures, and advocate for older adults in our community.

Executive Summary

Introduction

For community-based organizations that focus on seniors' wellbeing, the last two and a half years has been extremely challenging. The impact of the pandemic on seniors was compounded by social isolation, fear, and confusion surrounding the emergency response. Exacerbating the issues of COVID-19 were climate change emergencies that occurred in 2021. The heat dome that resulted in hundreds of premature deaths of vulnerable adults in BC prompted several non-profit organizations to take a leadership role to find solutions and guide the emergency preparedness process for our seniors and elders.

Taking a frontline approach, understanding the needs of our seniors, and having awareness of the barriers facing vulnerable people, non-profit organizations were perfectly placed to develop emergency preparedness and response plans. Driven by the urgent need to prepare for the next heatwave, staff from the City of Vancouver (COV), Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), and Fraser Health Authority (FHA) realized the value of contributions from community-based organizations and welcomed our input during consultations.

The Process

This project began with the creation of an Emergency Support Framework Committee comprised of several seniors' organizations. The committee shared experiences and resources with the intent of compiling a step-by-step framework on how to support seniors in the community during a heat-related emergency. Strengths and challenges were identified and in doing so, the committee was able to focus on gaps in the sector around emergency policies and procedures. As part of the process to find proactive solutions which addressed the inadequate preparations for extreme heat, the project coordinator researched and compiled existing resources from other municipalities both locally and abroad. The result of this extensive research proved that most of the materials needed were already available to share with other community organizations, government bodies and agencies. At this point the project team re-evaluated the project goals in consultation with the funder and chose not to reinvent the wheel and the committee concurred. Instead, the project pivoted to connect with organizations that had already done the work in responding to COVID-19 and other emergencies and sought permission to use the material that was produced by their organizations. The reports, presentations, pamphlets, and posters for emergencies were just a click away, discovered only after in-depth research was conducted. These resources are now available under the "Resource Kits" section of this report, organized by event and category to be easily downloaded and shared.

Collaborations & Impacts

The network of collaborators in this project was extensive and ranged from local neighbourhood agencies to government bodies and policy makers. Over forty key stakeholders took part on various levels to impact the project's goals and contribute to this final report. On a local level, the project focused on community presentations, intergenerational involvement, and a senior's registry initiative. Within the sector, the Seniors' Advisory Committee (SAC) for the COV was actively involved in the framework development with three SAC representatives contributing to this project. In Spring 2022, SAC's Climate Change and Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee held a forum with a panel of emergency management experts to address the concerns of community-based organizations. In addition, the working relationship between RCSS and emergency management departments at COV, VCH, and FHA resulted in a panelist presentation to share key research and knowledge for over 120 participant organizations in BC. We were able to share what we learned

from last year's heat dome, give insight to the development of policies and procedures, and identify areas for improvement. Key findings from sector collaborations include:

- Information and communication were limited by language barriers, access to internet and technology and delayed response times
- Cooling centres facilities were underutilized due to issues with accessibility, transportation, and lack of community awareness
- Funding models required time-consuming applications and reporting processes
- Lack of planning evident across all levels of government and health authorities
- Plans and discussions were too broad, not specifically focused on our most vulnerable seniors and elders with inconsistent representation at the table. No dedication to the demographic that was most impacted.
- Reliance on elder volunteers to assist during emergencies was short-sighted, inadequate, and defeated the purpose of helping that same at-risk population.

Further collaboration was held between VCH-funded Adult Day Programs (ADPs) through the Lower Mainland ADC Association. The intent was to request participation in an asset mapping survey and gauge interest in ADPs' willingness to become cooling centres for the seniors we serve and others in the community with the same needs. It was confirmed that there was both capacity and enthusiasm to support community members at these centres in the event of an emergency.

Other project goals such as establishing a volunteer registry for seniors, so ADPs and like-minded organizations can provide additional supports during emergencies has been initiated, although ongoing work is required in this area.

Outcomes & Recommendations

Where we go from here will be determined by the willingness of funders and policy makers to review and accept our recommendations. A viable plan with clear guidelines would need to be developed with all stakeholders along with an accountability table and ongoing agreeable funding models.

Long term, consistent participation of assigned staff to work on this collaborative effort with representation from CBSOs, a COV social planner dedicated to older adults, and community developers from VCH will be required if the collaboration is to be a successful undertaking. The outcomes of this working group, ideally, will shape our public policies that impact the aging population.

The non-profit sector saved the day during the pandemic and the heat dome emergency and with adequate, sustainable financial support, they will rise to the challenge again. The ball is now in the funders and policy maker's court! Our recommendations follow for their consideration.

Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Create a repository of information and resources on emergency preparedness and extreme heat for community-based seniors' organizations to disseminate on various platforms such as SAC's SharePoint Drive, Healthy Aging CORE Canada, Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP), and Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC (COSCO) websites.

After months of research, almost all the resources related to emergency preparedness and extreme heat that we were seeking was available on the internet. We quickly realized that various guides, reports, posters, and worksheets were scattered on each organization's website, making it difficult for organizations to identify the most practical resources. Our goal was to consolidate this valuable information onto one platform, so CBSOs can focus on checking in with seniors rather than reinventing materials. Platforms such as Healthy Aging CORE Canada, SAC's SharePoint Drive, OneDrive, and Issuu are good options to consider.

Recommendation #2: Create a position at the City of Vancouver for a dedicated Social Planner for Older Adults to liaise with SAC, community organizations, and seniors in the community, so they can easily share experiences and feedback, access expertise, and information.

SAC Members of the Community Services & Programming Subcommittee worked diligently to interview over a dozen municipalities in Canada to learn about their policies and work in the community to support older adults. The data showed that every municipality had at least one staff member or department dedicated to serving the senior population. This has further strengthened SAC's cause to formally propose a motion to City Council for the appointment of a Social Planner dedicated to older adults. There are proven examples of the benefits and with a rapid growing city like Vancouver, it is essential that the voices of our elders are prioritized.

Recommendation #3: Establish an Emergency Preparedness Committee comprised of consistent representation from VEMA, VCH, SAC, and CBSOs. A regular schedule for meetings with an accountability framework where goals are regularly assessed should be implemented.

The committee can be comprised of additional organizations including the Lower Mainland Adult Day Centre Association, COV's People with Disabilities Advisory Committee (PDAC), Vancouver Parks Board, Vancouver Public Library, neighbourhood houses, UWLM, FHA, and EMBC. Meetings should be scheduled quarterly, and the accountability framework would allow for members to track accomplishments and report their progress to the community annually. More importantly, this will also enable for emergency plans to be reviewed on an ongoing basis with existing strategies and clear procedures to be immediately activated.

Recommendation #4: Establish criteria for community-based seniors' organizations and other non-civic facilities to become cooling centres by ensuring adequate core funding is in place for staffing, food costs, program expenses, and other operational and administrative costs.

Places such as libraries, neighbourhood houses, community centres, and seniors' facilities bring people together and when emergencies hit, community members will turn to organizations they trust, are familiar with, and have accessed programs regularly for support. For example, Adult Day Centres are already equipped with the necessary equipment to support older seniors in the community with wheelchair-accessible bathrooms, senior-friendly equipment, and have long-term rapport with caregivers.

Operating hours and locations of cooling centres should also remain consistent from year to year.

Recommendation #5: Establish a registry with Adult Day Programs, case managers at community health units, cancer societies, dialysis units, community-based organizations, and seniors in the community.

Check-in calls to seniors can be a lifesaving strategy during emergencies. For seniors who are not tied to any community supports, it is especially pertinent that they be referred to the registry for staff and volunteers to reach out over the phone and assess their needs. This will require ongoing maintenance and updating of the registry and buy-in from the entire community to identify isolated seniors.

Recommendation #6: Establish criteria for funding models during emergencies that do not require grant applications.

Core emergency funding for organizations is necessary. As CBSOs continue to work on the frontlines to offer essential services to the community during emergencies, the existing funding model poses even greater barriers for staff to do their work efficiently. Applications and reporting take a significant amount of time to complete and when disasters strike, our greatest priority is to ensure safety and preserve life. Emergency funds that are automatically distributed will greatly benefit both frontline organizations and funders. Core funding will also increase staff capacity and provide sufficient compensation for their time, especially in the evenings and on weekends.

Recommendation #7: Prepare community with information about extreme heat events and how to stay safe in the heat prior to the summer by offering in-person community presentations at CBSOs.

Emergency preparedness education can be done in various formats, but in-person presentations have been proven to be one of the most effective ways to encourage community members to begin preparations at home. Not only were they provided with resources and information on how to prepare for the extreme heat and how to build an emergency kit, the group also had the opportunity to share their personal experiences and exchange tips and tricks on what strategies were most beneficial, especially for neighbours living in older multi-unit buildings.

Community members shared the following feedback during the presentations:

- Would like more in-person emergency preparedness presentations throughout the year, in multiple languages
- Government to provide clear information about cooling centres in advance of the extreme heat, who can access them, and what services are available throughout the day
- Health authorities and government to widely disseminate easy-to-read, multi-lingual resources on how to recognize heat exhaustion and heat stroke
- Increase accessibility of communication methods including multi-lingual resources on multiple platforms including the news, radio, flyers, CBSO registries (e.g. Weather alerts in advance, culturally-sensitive posters with plain language)
- More support from building managers and government agencies to operate cooling centres for tenants and make exceptions for window coverings and the temporary installation of cooling equipment in suites
- Additional funding and improved infrastructure for transportation services to help seniors get to cooling centres
- More training for HandyDART and taxi drivers to recognize the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke among older adults

Project Goals & Impact

Local Impact (Renfrew-Collingwood)

Goals

- Include in a toolkit, the work and experience of all community partners during the pandemic and heatwave that can be shared with other community-based seniors' organizations
- Prepare communication plan for distribution of emergency packages for seniors and registry members (educational opportunities focused on preventative measures)
- Develop action plan with community partners for catastrophic events and emergencies

Impact

Emergency Preparedness Education

- RCSS conducted emergency preparedness educational programs prior to the extreme heat event and provided emergency kits to Adult Day Program clients
- Connected with our local community partners to provide overview of project and invited their members to participate in workshops and the framework committee
 - Collingwood Neighbourhood House, Kingsway Continental, Renfrew Park Community Centre, Renfrew Branch Library, Three Links Manor
- Arranged in-person emergency preparedness presentations at the facilities of our local community partners and collaborated in promoting and advertising the workshops
 - 9 presentations delivered on our block and neighbourhood (East 22nd Avenue between Renfrew Street and Nootka Street); 1 Emergency Preparedness Presentation delivered in Cantonese in collaboration with the Seniors' Health & Wellness Institute (COSCO) and 1 bilingual presentation in English and Cantonese at RCSS
 - Participants received resource packages with PreparedBC Guides, worksheets on how to stay safe in the heat, and information on cooling centres
- Shared emergency preparedness information and resources in RCSS' monthly newsletter
 - [February 2022 Newsletter](#) – “Are You Prepared For An Emergency?”
 - [March 2022 Newsletter](#) – “Important Document Checklist”
 - [April 2022 Newsletter](#) – “Medical Supplies & Information Checklist”
 - [June 2022 Newsletter](#) – “Important Phone Numbers”
 - [July 2022 Newsletter](#) – “Thank You!”

Intergenerational Collaboration

- Emergency preparedness presentation on extreme heat safety for older adults delivered to Grade 8 Leadership students, emphasized the immense value that youth bring to the community in supporting seniors during emergencies
- Coordinated with Windermere Secondary School's Leadership Program to facilitate an Emergency Kit Donation Drive with the school community
- Grade 8 Leadership students distributed posters and flyers, shared information with family, teachers, and peers, and worked collaboratively with other Leadership classes to collect donations

- Students collected three boxes of donations with a variety of emergency kit supplies including face masks, hand sanitizer, first aid kits, ice packs, batteries, emergency blankets, and flashlights

Strengthening Our Continuum of Care

- In healthcare, the Continuum of Care model can mean different things. In clinical settings, it is used to describe “how healthcare providers follow a patient from preventive care, through medical incidents, rehabilitation, and maintenance.” In the community and senior living settings, it refers to “bundled care options that follow an individual through time, adapting to their changing needs” or “a system all under one roof or available at one community, designed to meet the needs of the seniors living there.”
 - RCSS has adopted this model on our block (East 22nd Avenue between Renfrew Street and Nootka Street) by providing recreational therapeutic programs and health monitoring to seniors referred to our program. As their health conditions change overtime and their needs become more advanced, we are equipped to support seniors and their caregivers in transitioning to more appropriate programs and services by working with their case manager from the local community health unit.
- Established RCSS as a reliable source of support and information for seniors and their caregivers
- Improved emergency preparedness communication plans and guidelines in Three Links Care Centre, a long-term care complex which includes supportive housing
 - RCSS is located on the ground floor of Three Links and partakes in emergency preparedness planning with Three Links staff on a monthly basis.
- Ongoing work to develop a registry for seniors to conduct check-in calls during an emergency

Community Asset Mapping

- Created and sent survey to all Adult Day Centres to determine assets and needs in our immediate area related to future extreme heat events (e.g. Which facilities are designated cooling centres? Who can offer transportation? Who can provide meals?)
- Please see page 20 for the survey results of our “Renfrew-Collingwood Community Partners”

Sector Impact (Community-Based Seniors' Services, Adult Day Centres, COV's Seniors' Advisory Committee, Emergency Support for Seniors Framework Committee)

Goals

- Meet with seniors' groups and service providers to share experiences and successes, consolidate emergency preparedness plans, identify gaps, provide recommendations to funders, and strategize to ensure seniors are safe and protected prior to and during an emergency
- Develop Community Action Plan with guidance from City of Vancouver's Resilient Neighbourhoods Toolkit and Program in collaboration with community partners including the Vancouver Emergency Management Agency and Seniors' Advisory Committee's Climate Change and Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee
- Capture ideas for community-based seniors' organizations to initiate a Neighbours Supporting Neighbours program in their community
- Support forum for the community in April 2022 to learn about emergency preparedness resources and receive input for a community action plan in conjunction with Seniors' Advisory Committee's Climate Change and Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee

Impact

Emergency Support for Seniors Framework Committee

- Extended invitation to all city-funded seniors' organizations to participate in discussions and meetings to develop the framework
- Facilitated 4 online meetings – January, February, May, June of 2022 – with committee members to discuss best practices and challenges during COVID, share emergency preparedness plans, prioritize committee goals, and assess and pivot to more relevant objectives
 - Whole Way House, 411 Seniors Centre Society, Britannia Community Services Centre, South Granville Seniors Centre, Seniors' Advisory Committee, Jewish Seniors Alliance
- Consolidated existing emergency plans and procedures from each organization to be incorporated in a shareable resource package (e.g. Volunteer Training Guide and Chill Zone Set Up Procedure)

City of Vancouver's Seniors' Advisory Committee

- Participated in Climate Change and Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee Meetings from October 21st, 2021 to June 22nd, 2022 to plan a spring forum on preparing for the next heat dome with community-based seniors' organizations and key government decision-makers
- Provided administrative support, shared research, and provided recommendations of community partners for subcommittee to invite to the forum
- Supported the Community Services and Programming Subcommittee with outreach to municipalities across Canada to identify seniors-based planning departments, programs, and emergency procedures
 - Collate best practices and examples to share with the City of Vancouver to hire a Social Planner dedicated to older adults

Knowledge Sharing with Stakeholders

- Chaired, facilitated, and participated in multiple taskforces, consultations, and committee meetings to share knowledge and experience in supporting our seniors during COVID and the heat dome
 - January 28, 2022 – Meeting with Katia Tynan, Vancouver Emergency Management Agency
 - February 16, 2022 - United Way's "Emergency Preparedness Provincial Consultation"
 - May 3, 2022 – Meeting with VCH's "Extreme Heat Check-In Supports Team"
 - May 16, 2022 – SAC's "Planning Together: Preparing for the Next Heat Dome" Forum
 - May 19, 2022 & June 9, 2022 – COV & VCH Roundtable with Community Organizations
 - June 14, 2022 – Meeting with Miranda Myles, Vancouver Emergency Management Agency
 - Monthly – SAC's Emergency Preparedness & Climate Change Subcommittee
- Established contact with partner organizations and made recommendations to SAC to create an efficient network of expertise

Lower Mainland Adult Day Care Association

- Established standing emergency planning committee with the LMADC Association by sharing ideas to continue supporting vulnerable seniors during emergencies especially on the weekends
- Created and sent survey to all Adult Day Centres to determine assets and gaps related to extreme heat emergency planning (e.g. Which facilities are designated cooling centres? Who can offer transportation? Who can provide meals?)
- Please see page 21 for the survey results of our "Lower Mainland Adult Day Centre Association Partners"

Government Bodies & Agencies Collaboration (COV's Vancouver Emergency Management Agency, VCH Healthy Environments Team, SMART Fund)

Unintended Goal

- We did not anticipate the impact that we would have with government agencies and health authorities. We were provided with several opportunities to connect with stakeholders from VCH, FHA, and local and provincial governments to share our experiences and offer feedback on best practices for the development of their resources, tools, and plans.

Impact

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

- Preliminary research results of extreme heat resources were forwarded to our funders to ensure their processes and policy development were more efficient and effective in supporting diverse CBSS
- Presented to 120+ staff and partners from VCH and FHA on our emergency preparedness work on May 30, 2022

Community-Based Seniors' Organization Perspective

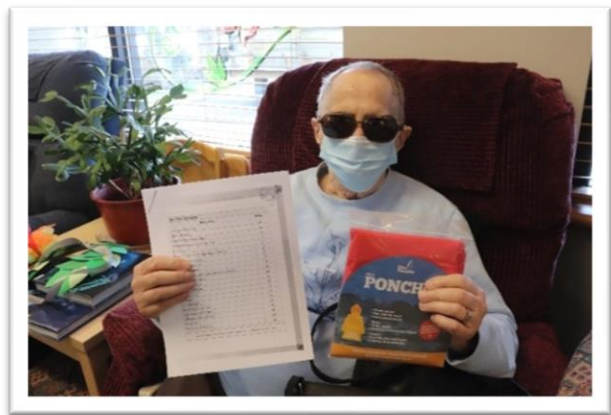
- Provided stakeholders with proven examples and practical applications that are successful in a diverse, multi-cultural community (Renfrew-Collingwood) and can leverage community development outcomes
- Feedback and concerns we received directly from community workshop participants were shared directly with SAC, COV staff, Vancouver Parks Board, Vancouver Public Library, and City Councillors

Advocacy

- Call to action for funders to provide long-term, permanent emergency funding for the CBSS sector
- Support SAC in advocating to the COV to appoint a Social Planner dedicated to older adults
- Propose that health authorities reinstate frontline community developers to participate in the emergency planning process on a quarterly basis
- Continued advocacy to government and emergency management agencies to provide timely, consistent, concise updates on upcoming extreme heat events and translated communication materials

Community Connections

Collaborating with community partners is an integral part of our work here at the centre and we strongly believe that to embody our slogan, “Taking Seniors to Heart” takes a strong, like-minded team especially preparing for emergencies. We connected with a diverse group of organizations on our block (East 22nd Avenue between Renfrew Street and Nootka Street) and neighbourhood to offer in-person emergency preparedness presentations at their facilities. Many participants expressed interest in learning about the impacts of extreme heat and would like to see more community workshops as we experience intense climate change emergencies. In addition, we collaborated with Windermere Secondary School’s Leadership 8 Class, one of our longstanding intergenerational partners to coordinate an Emergency Kit Donation Drive. Our Recreation Team also facilitated programs with our Adult Day Program clients to ensure heat response plans were in place at home and caregivers were informed of extreme weather alerts.



Resource packages with emergency preparedness information including PreparedBC guides, heat-related illness posters, and emergency kit checklists were prepared for workshop participants to review at home. Many seniors do not have access to a mobile device or computer, so offering hard copies of key information is essential.



A bilingual presentation in English and Chinese on emergency preparedness was offered at our centre. Several Chinese seniors shared their apprehension with not being able to connect with emergency health services due to language barriers if they ever needed to – this is a shared concern for many older adults who speak a language other than English at home. Participants were gifted a tote bag to start and build their Grab-and-Go Bag at home and emergency kit supplies were given as bingo prizes!



We partnered with the Seniors' Health & Wellness Institute, a project with the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations (COSCO) to co-host a Cantonese workshop on Emergency Preparedness at Renfrew Park Community Centre for the Renfrew Chinese Seniors Group. The facilitator shared safety tips for various emergency scenarios including earthquakes, pandemics, and extreme weather. Our friends at Kingsway Continental also welcomed us for a presentation where they shared their experiences on how they managed with the heat in their homes and advised one another on where to purchase affordable cooling equipment.

"I did not know what cooling centres were and who could use them until today's presentation."



Renfrew Branch Library kindly hosted us as their first in-person workshop in over 2 years! It was a great opportunity to bring community members together to discuss the methods they employed to stay cool in their homes such as in their co-ops and workplaces. We received valuable feedback from participants that emergency preparedness presentations should be more readily available to the public including information on extreme heat alerts and who can access cooling centres. We also had the opportunity to connect with residents of Three Links Manor, an independent seniors housing facility. Seniors shared recommendations on their building's emergency plans, identified the need for floor wardens during emergencies, and expressed deep concern about overheating at home and during HandyDART rides.



Windermere's Leadership Program offers students the opportunity to get involved in their community to gain experience and strengthen their leadership skills. Our Recreation Team strives to integrate an intergenerational program with local elementary and secondary school partners every year. We have built a strong rapport with Windermere's teachers. The Leadership 8 class learned about the impacts of extreme heat on seniors and coordinated an Emergency Kit Donation Drive by distributing posters and flyers and collecting donations from their school community. In the end, they collected four full boxes of items and were excited to share their efforts with the seniors!

"Some of my friends did not recognize the signs of heat exhaustion."



To continue with our COVID response and emergency planning efforts, our Recreation Team facilitated two Conversation Corner programs. Seniors watched Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows & Katzie Seniors Network's "Emergency Preparedness for Seniors" video. For many of our seniors who live with complex mobility and health challenges, special considerations need to be made when creating these plans. For example, seniors who live away from their family require extra check-ins and support from community organizations and an extra supply of medication should be placed in their emergency kits. Cooling centres also need to be equipped with proper amenities to support older seniors including wheelchair-accessible bathrooms, sturdy chairs with arm rests, and supplies for incontinence issues.



Community Connections

Community Asset Mapping

Community asset mapping is foundational to emergency planning. This process entails identifying “assets” -- facilities, programs, skills, procedures, tools, services, and people – that already exist in the community and can be leveraged and utilized without “reinventing the wheel.” Our organization learned during the pandemic and the heat wave that it is more important than ever to stay connected with our seniors and reach out to neighbours who may be living alone.

We were especially interested in knowing what community resources were made available in Renfrew-Collingwood during last year’s heat wave and what services will be coordinated in anticipation for this summer and future extreme heat events. As a result, we produced a short survey on Jotform and sent it in March 2022 to the Lower Mainland Adult Day Care Association and several community partners on our block (East 22nd Avenue between Renfrew Street and Nootka Street) and surrounding area. We focused on identifying air-conditioned facilities, wheelchair-accessible vans and buses, and kitchen spaces that could make ready-to-eat meals for seniors. The valuable feedback we received will enable us to coordinate a comprehensive community response plan and a cooling centre at our facility that will accommodate the most vulnerable and frail elders.

Survey Questions

Cooling Centre & Heat Relief Services

- 1) Did you have a cooling centre or offer heat relief services last summer (2021)? Do you plan to offer a cooling centre or heat relief services this year?
- 2) If you offered a cooling centre last summer (2021), what are some of the successes and challenges you experienced (e.g. how many patrons utilized your service, were there any programs available to patrons, what time did the centre close)?
- 3) If you plan to offer a cooling centre this year, what is the timeframe your facility will remain open (e.g. opening and closing hours, weekdays, weekends)?
- 4) Is your facility air conditioned? How many rooms are air conditioned?
- 5) Do you have water fountains available for public use?
- 6) Do you have a misting station or a similar service?

Community Outreach

- 1) How do you share information about your services to members and seniors in the community (e.g. check-in calls, social media, in-person outreach visits, brochures, etc.)?
- 2) Are you connected with any seniors’ buildings in the neighbourhood or are aware where vulnerable seniors live?
- 3) Do you have resources in multiple languages? Do you have translation services available (e.g. volunteers or staff who speak other languages)?

On-Site Services

- 1) Do you have access to a bus or van in emergency situations? If yes, how many seats are available? Are they equipped for walkers and wheelchairs?
- 2) Do you have the capacity to cook and offer meals on site for seniors?
- 3) Do you have the capacity to cook and deliver meals to seniors' homes?

- 4) Do you offer social or recreation programs for seniors during the week/weekend? If yes, what kind? What is the average age of seniors participating in your programs?
- 5) Do you charge for your services or programs? If yes, how much?
- 6) Do you have washrooms available for public use?
- 7) Do you have staff or volunteers on-site over the weekend?

Accessibility & Emergency Plan

- 1) What is your facility's capacity limit including staff and volunteers?
- 2) Is your centre wheelchair accessible?
- 3) Is your centre able to accommodate pets?
- 4) Does your organization have an extreme weather emergency/response plan?
- 5) Are there any heat response or extreme weather resources that you are aware of and/or that worked well for your organization and members?

Other Suggestions

Is there any additional information related to supporting seniors during emergencies or extreme heat resources you would like to share with us (e.g. facility is close to a spray park, access to taxi vouchers, extra volunteers or staff, etc.)? Do you have any other suggestions or concerns?

Survey Results

Renfrew-Collingwood Community Partners

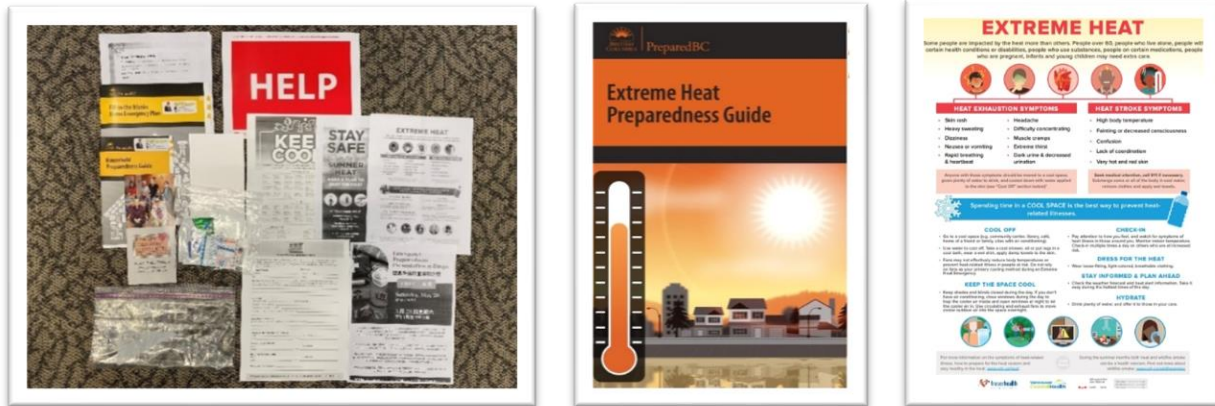
	Air-Conditioned Facility	Commercial Kitchen	Transportation	Staff or Volunteers on Weekend
Renfrew Branch Library	Yes	No	No	Yes
Renfrew Park Community Centre	No	Yes	No	Yes
Three Links Manor	Yes, one large room. Residents only.	Yes	No	Yes
Kingsway Continental	Yes, one part of the building.	No	No	Yes
Collingwood Neighbourhood House	Yes	Yes	One 14-passenger shuttle bus with ramp and wheelchair locks. A couple of vans, not senior-friendly.	Yes

Lower Mainland Adult Day Care Association

	Air-Conditioned Facility	Commercial Kitchen or Meals	Transportation	Staff or Volunteers on Weekend
L'Chaim Adult Day Centre Society	Yes, entire facility. Open 7 days a week to members and visitors.	Yes	No	Yes. ADP is closed, but centre is open on weekends at reduced hours.
West End Adult Day Care Centre Society	Yes, but old system.	Yes, for referred clients.	No	No
South Vancouver and Beulah Gardens Adult Day Centre	Yes, both facilities.	Yes, only during program hours.	Two 22-passenger accessible buses One 5-seater van with capacity for one wheelchair	No
Health & Home Care Society of BC	No	No	No	No
ASK Friendship Centre Society	Yes, one room at ~3,000 sq. ft.	Yes	One 9-passenger bus One 18-passenger bus	No
Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House	No, only 2 portable A/C units.	Yes	No	Yes, on Saturdays.
Crossreach Adult Day Centre	No	Yes	One 14-passenger bus for 2 wheelchairs	No
Renfrew-Collingwood Seniors' Society	Yes, entire facility.	Yes	No	Yes, can be arranged.

Resource Kits


We encourage you to utilize the guides, fact sheets, posters, and reports in the following resource kits and circulate the link to your networks. If you have any suggestions on other resources to include, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.









Extreme Heat & Emergency Preparedness Resource Kits

To access the “Resource Kits,” please click [here](#).

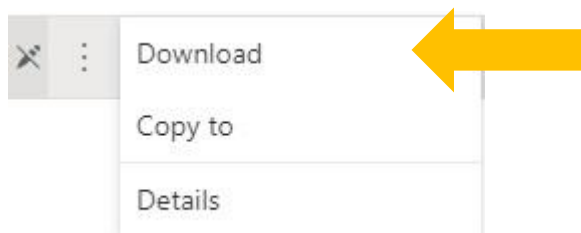
- To view the files as “Tiles”, click the dropdown menu icon  in the top righthand corner.

My files > Extreme Heat Resource Kit 

Name	Modified	Modified By	File size	Sharing
Guides & Fact Sheets	3 hours ago	Cassandra Ly	14 items	 Shared
Organization Tools	2 hours ago	Cassandra Ly	10 items	 Shared
Posters	3 hours ago	Cassandra Ly	17 items	 Shared
Reports	3 hours ago	Cassandra Ly	16 items	 Shared

 and three dots 

- To download a file, hover over the pen icon  and three dots  will appear. Click on the dots and select “Download.”



Wellness Check-In Calls Registry

Throughout COVID, as we transitioned to remote programs and services, weekly phone, and video calls quickly became one of the most engaging and effective ways for our organization to check in on our seniors. We had a registry of our clients and the contact information of their caregivers and emergency contacts. Various aspects of the system and procedures are already in place for the registry to be adapted by organizations including a Seniors' Check-In Record Form, a Registry Member Enrollment Form (see page 25 & 26), and Criteria for Prioritizing Clients.



This registry model was utilized during last year's heat dome and once again, proved to be a very effective solution to ensure seniors were either being checked in on by loved ones or were keeping cool in their homes, and to share weather updates. However, there are still countless numbers of isolated seniors who are not tied to any community supports. Recommendation #5 on page 9 speaks to the many groups in the community that can work together to identify older adults that would benefit from being a registry member.

It is our hope to further develop the registry with the assistance of our collaborators and funders. Outreach to organizations and updating personal information annually takes time, and long-term buy-in and commitment are crucial to refer and support more seniors in the community. The process of connecting with seniors through the registry will also aid in ensuring seniors get adequate supports throughout the aging process. Referrals could be made through local health units for their assistance if necessary.

A sample letter and application form will assist other community organizations that are interested in creating their own wellness check in programs. This information is easily managed on Excel or Microsoft Access.



Dear Seniors and Families,

Renfrew-Collingwood Seniors Society has been providing senior's services within the community for more than forty-five years. Recently, we have become concerned that high temperatures, wildfire smoke or flooding may put seniors living at home at risk for isolation or illness due to these extreme weather events. We are taking action to assist seniors in our community in the event of climate change emergencies and would like to invite you to join our senior's registry as part of our emergency check-in program.

As a member of our registry, you will receive a check-in call from one of our experienced staff members if there is an extreme weather event. The staff member will ask you a few questions to make sure that you are doing alright and ask whether you need any additional support. The staff member will also provide you with up-to-date information, connect you with appropriate resources, and answer any questions you may have about the emergency.

It is our intention to assist any senior in need during extreme weather events, so we strongly encourage you to join our registry program and contact you, if necessary. We can assure you that your personal details will remain confidential and none of the information you provide will be shared without your permission. All you need to do is fill out the registry form, return it to us, and we will be here to support you.

If you have any questions or would like to refer a friend or neighbour to our program, please call 604-430-1441 or email rcss@rencollseniors.ca.

Let us be part of the solution!

Sincerely,
Renfrew-Collingwood Seniors' Society



DRAFT

Wellness Check-In Calls Registry Member

As a Registry Member, the Renfrew-Collingwood Seniors' Society will call you during an emergency to check in and assess if you require any additional support. Our centre may be open for relief services from extreme weather including the heat wave. Details of opening hours will be provided to you in advance. Completed forms can be dropped off in-person, mailed or emailed to us. Your information will be kept confidential.

Contact Information

Sign Up Date:

Full Name: _____ Gender: _____ ☐ she/her ☐ he/him ☐ they/them
Age: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Home Address (If we need to call Emergency Health Services on your behalf, we will need to inform them about where you live. Please include your postal code and information on how to access your suite or house including room number, buzzer code and whether your front or back entrance/alleyway is the best way to get in.)

Accessibility

Do you have any pets? _____ Preferred Language(s): _____
Dietary Restrictions & Allergies: _____
Do you use a cane, walker or wheelchair? _____
Do you receive any Home Support services? If YES, how often? _____

Personal Health Information

Is there anything you would like us to know about your health condition(s)? _____

Primary Emergency Contact (Living closest to you)

Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Secondary Emergency Contact

Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Out-of-Town Emergency Contact

Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

For staff use: Membership Date: _____



DRAFT

健康登記電話成員

蘭菲高靈活耆英會會在緊急情況下給作為註冊會員的您打電話，檢查您是否需要任何額外的幫助。耆英會可能會為包括熱浪在內的極端天氣提供救濟服務。關於服務時間詳情將提前提供給您。填妥的表格可以您親自遞交、郵寄或通過電子郵件發送給我們。您提供的信息將被完全保密。

聯繫信息

註冊日期:

全名 (拼音名): _____ 性別: _____

年齡: _____ 電話: _____ 電郵: _____

家庭地址 (如果我們需要代表您致電緊急醫療服務中心，我們需要告知他們您的居住地址。請提供您房屋地址的郵政編碼和如何進入您的套房或房屋，包括房間號、門鈴代碼以及進入您房屋的最好方式) (例：前門或後門/小巷)

特殊需求

您有養寵物嗎? _____ 首選語言: _____

任何飲食限制和過敏源: _____

您使用拐杖、助行器或輪椅嗎? _____

您是否接受任何家庭支持服務? 如果是，多久一次? _____

個人健康信息

關於您的健康狀況，您有什麼想讓我們知道的嗎? _____

主要緊急聯絡人 (住在離您最近的地方)

姓名 (拼音名): _____ 關係: _____

電話: _____ 電郵: _____

次級緊急聯絡人

姓名 (拼音名): _____ 關係: _____

電話: _____ 電郵: _____

外地緊急聯絡人

姓名 (拼音名): _____ 關係: _____

電話: _____ 電郵: _____

供員工使用: _____ 入會日期: _____

We can do better together!



2970 East 22nd Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5M 2Y4

604-430-1441 | rcss@rencollseniors.ca

www.rencollseniors.ca

For more information about our project, please contact
Cassandra Ly at cly@rencollseniors.ca.