



Partners' Gathering Summary: August 1, 2019, 9:30 – 12:30
Burnaby Neighbourhood House (Banquet Room, 3rd Floor) 4460 Beresford St. Burnaby



SESSION GOALS

1. Reinforce collective learning
2. Sustaining impact
3. Strengthen connections across Allies in Aging partners.

PARTICIPANTS: 34 representatives from all four projects, including partner agency staff, senior volunteer leaders and sector stakeholders.

INTRODUCTIONS: Participants shared a commitment to reach out to each other in February 2020 to learn how partners were continuing to connect seniors across our communities.

ACTIVITIES: Participants reflected on how our work to reach and connect with isolated seniors has changed as a result of Allies in Aging.

Before Allies in Aging...

- Focus was place-based vs. regional
- Programs were limited by geographical location
- Approaches were fragmented, narrow in scope
- Didn't work with large institutional partners
- Limited capacity to dream beyond existing programs or explore alternate approaches to isolated seniors

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Because of Allies in Aging...

- Expanded impact and partnerships beyond “place”, to include more diverse perspectives and cultures
- Applied Collective Impact values and practices, increasing expertise and capacity
- Increased scope and scale of programs and approaches
- Shared and implemented learning and ideas from across the region, trying and testing different approaches
- Elevated professional expertise through cross-sector connections and relationships
- Shifted from small to big picture perspective
- Strengthened evaluation to measure and understand impact
- Front line learning nurtured leaders and champions, which influenced policy

Challenges: Participants identified challenges that came with being part of Allies in Aging, including:

- A steep learning curve
- Staff turnover impacted programs. 50% of participants joined after the start of Allies in Aging; they emphasized the importance of orientation when being brought into a broad, complex initiative.
- High level of engagement with the broad initiative was needed, with relatively small funding

SUSTAINING IMPACT: Participants shared how they can embed positive changes moving forward:

- Apply learning and collective impact philosophy across all programs
- Move beyond regions and neighbourhoods in stakeholder relationships and programs
- Partner in programs and funding applications in new ways
- Access online resources (workshops, Fact Sheets, etc.) for training
- Reinforce the community of practice established through Allies in Aging
- Develop ways to sustain connections and work with partner agencies, i.e. through a communication strategy and regular meetings
- Integrate evaluation expertise and results in programs and funding applications
- Be creative in funding partnerships—highlight the value of collective impact expertise and programming to work across communities and sectors
- Continue to share assets and resources through the Pan-Canadian Project Hub and CORE

NEXT STEPS

The Allies in Aging website will be updated to reflect program changes and will be sustained by Family Services of the North Shore.

- A Shared Learning Event for volunteers is being held on Sept. 16. Registration details will be distributed the week of Aug. 19.
- A Shared Learning Event for service providers will be held in October.