



ALLIES IN
aging

CONNECTING SENIORS ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

October 2019



Community Impact

"Before I found this group, I was very alone as I am a widow and my children live elsewhere. Our amazing leader, Mojgan T-N., drew me in by asking me to sing for the group. Now, it is my joy to come every week." (Paraphrased from translation by group leader; photos provided by the group.)

Every Wednesday morning, a group of Persian seniors gathers in Coquitlam to share language, music, poetry, conversation, learning, and food. Members told Mariam Larson, Allies in Aging Backbone Lead, that their time together is precious, providing connection and support they cannot find anywhere else. As one member said, *"Before, we were orphans. Now, we are family."*

Gina Hortelano, from **SHARE Family and Community Services**, helped them get started through the **Welcoming Seniors' Spaces** project. She supported their dynamic volunteer leader in finding an inclusive meeting place, organizing people, and connecting with community resources. **Seniors on the Move** connected them to transportation options, which led to group bus trips. Outreach approaches inspired, in part, by **Seniors Hub**, and **Volunteer Impact** training helped them grow from a few people to 35 - 40 meeting every week.

Members contribute in different ways, by reading Farsi literature or poetry, singing or playing instruments, sharing advice with newcomers, or providing food. They all expressed deep appreciation for their volunteer leader, recognizing the time and effort it takes to support and sustain their gatherings.

They also have a wish list. They rely on their leader for translation during information sessions and hope to find Farsi-speaking professionals to talk about health and emergency services, transportation options, legal resources and other key topics. They are also outgrowing their meeting space and no longer have access to a bus for group trips. **Email if you can help:** connect@alliesinaging.ca

Check Out Our Updated Resources

- [- Volunteer Training Resources](#)
- [- Fact Sheets on Social Isolation](#)
- [- Transportation Links](#)

Upcoming

Mark your calendar for our final Shared Learning Event for Service Providers on Nov. 21, 9:30 - 11:30 in Burnaby. Registration details will be emailed to partner organizations the week of Nov. 4. (Note: This session is for service provider staff.)

The session will include learning from **Seniors on the Move** and **Volunteer Impact**, sharing of the Allies in Aging **Outreach Toolkit** being developed by **Seniors Hub** and **Welcoming Seniors' Spaces**, and evaluation highlights.

Allies in Aging collaborates to connect seniors across our communities through leadership, outreach, transportation, training and advocacy.

From 2016 to 2019, over thirty organizations worked together to connect 15,000+ seniors to supports and services. Our focus was on seniors who are at risk of isolation due to disability, low income, language or cultural barriers.

[Check out our website. Learn about projects and access resources.](#)

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