



Atlantic Summer
Institute on
Healthy and Safe
Communities

l'Institut d'été
sur les collectivités
sûres et en santé au
Canada atlantique

Posterboard Presentation

Health Care and Nutrition for Older Adults and Seniors - A Rural Newfoundland Perspective

Presenter
Edward Wade

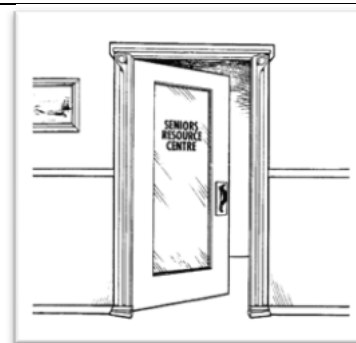
Description of Presentation

Under the title of "Diminishing Vulnerability for Older Adults and Seniors" the proposal was accepted by the National Literacy Secretariat in the Fall of 2004. Work began by researching what was available for helping seniors with literacy issues across the country and this pan-canadian search was completed by the first project coordinator. In February of 2005, Edward took over the project. Upon review of the research the next phase was to do a series of focus groups which were done with groups of seniors on the Connaigre Peninsula, six hours from St. John's.

Upon completion of the focus groups and with the research in hand, the project went to the pilot stage which was conducted on the Bonavista Peninsula in the community of Port Union. The audience was a group of seniors who lived in St. Catherine's Haven, a not for profit seniors complex with a population of fourteen females in the age range of 65 to 84. The project was facilitated by a retired nurse, Jocelyn Cook.

The group initially met for a one hour session. The ladies lived independently in the complex and had little or no relationship with each other. By the second week they were planning a two-hour session; by the third week a three-hour session and eventually ended spending up to four hours together on a weekly basis... the Power of Relationship Building!!

The project was intended to be eight weeks but by the middle of the first session they were talking about the next eight weeks which were developed for them and by the middle of the second session they were talking about the next eight weeks, which again were developed for them! Eight weeks became twenty-four. The group are still together and meet on a weekly basis with a new facilitator as Jocelyn has move to the Burin Peninsula



Edward (Ed) Wade is a retired school administrator in St. John's. Upon retirement he began a second career in community development and capacity building. For a three year period, he has worked as a Literacy Coordinator in a NL Housing Community Centre. Following that he was responsible for the development of a Strategic Literacy Plan for the five community centres in the city-Many Hearts-One Voice.

Ed has been a member of the Literacy Development Council, is a current member of Literacy NL and is Newfoundland and Labrador's representative on the National Seniors Council.

He has held a three year position as Literacy Coordinator with the



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but is continuing the program there! The following Fall, all literacy funding was cut. Their proposal to enlarge the project was accepted in June of 2007 and the project is currently running in Bell Island (two groups), Fortune, Port Union, Harbor Breton and St. John's.

There are twenty-four weeks of materials for the participants under the title of Health Care and Nutrition. They include How to Prevent Falls, How to Use Medications Safely, How to Keep Your Mind Sharp, Healthy Eating, Osteoporosis Prevention, Diabetes Prevention and Control, Heart Disease Prevention, Foot Care for Older Adults, etc.

The outcomes included but were not limited to: an increased knowledge of health care issues and how to prevent others; how to access health care providers; how to read and access other materials related to health care; an increased relationship with others in the project; a visibility that was easy to replicate in other communities.

The next steps were to replicate the project in nine coastal communities in Labrador with a focus on training older adults and seniors in the use of technology but we are still awaiting funding from OLES.

How you will benefit

From this presentation participants will:

- Learn how a project that started in one small community can be replicated in other communities with the emphasis on rural;
- Learn how older adults and seniors can achieve independence through improved reading and functions-related literacy skills and how they can increase their ability to cope with situations where a higher level of literacy can make a difference in their everyday lives;
- Learn more about the obstacles faced by older adults and seniors and how to overcome them; and
- Learn the importance of developing relationships in any learning venture. "Do with-not for" is still good advice for facilitators.

Handouts and Resources

Available during the presentation

Contact Information

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Seniors Resource Centre and this project was developed in conjunction with the Centre and with funding from the then National Literacy Secretariat (currently Office of Literacy and Essential Skills - OLES).