

AFIX NEWSLETTER

Fall 2019

Upcoming WHO/IFA Webinar

2019 WHO/IFA WEBINAR SERIES

The Decade of Healthy Ageing: Scaling Up Age-Friendly Cities and Communities

The Decade of Healthy Ageing is proposed as a global collaboration led by WHO that will bring together governments, international agencies, health professionals, academia, the media, the private sector and civil society to improve the lives of older people, their families and the communities they live in.

Presented by:



Ms Alana Officer
Team Lead - Healthy Ageing
Division of Healthier Populations
World Health Organization
Geneva, Switzerland

28 November 2019
9:00AM - 10:00AM
Eastern Standard Time

[Register Now](#)

This Webinar Will Include an Overview Of:

- How Age-Friendly cities and communities fit into the Decade proposal?
- What are the implications for countries, cities, and communities?
- How will progress be tracked?
- Resources Available for Global network members (Guidance, good practice, affiliates etc)

The IFA and the WHO Division of Healthier Populations are pleased to announce the tenth in a series of webinars connecting knowledge, new ideas and innovation around age-friendly environments (AFE).

The webinar [The Decade of Health Ageing: Scaling Up Age-Friendly Cities and Communities](#) will be presented by:

Ms Alana Officer: Team Lead - Healthy Ageing, Division of Healthier Populations, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland.

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- Resources Available for Global network members (Guidance, good practice, affiliates etc)

Take this opportunity to connect with colleagues interested in AFE on **Thursday, 28 November 2019 at 9am EST.**

[Register](#)

Past WHO/IFA Webinars



Missed a webinar in the WHO/IFA webinar series? Click the button below to view previous webinars.

[Recordings](#)

Age Friendly Radio



"Aged to Perfection/Old Enough to Know Better" is a 30 minute program airs once a month on CJSW Radio 90.9 in Calgary, Canada on the 4th Monday of each month at 11:30am and 8:30pm MST.

It can also be listened to any time on Soundcloud.

[Listen now](#)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN
TO BE AGE-FRIENDLY

The Need To Consider The Societal Implications Of Aging and Technology



Submitted by
Susan Williams
Founder
Booming Encore

You are probably very aware that the global population is ageing. As baby boomers begin to cross over from middle age to older age coupled with increasing levels of longevity, the ageing wave is starting to build. As reported by the United Nations, the ageing population of the world is poised to introduce numbers that have never been experienced before; “...the number of older persons – those aged 60 years or over – is expected to more than double by 2050 and to more than triple by 2100, rising from 962 million globally in 2017 to 2.1 billion in 2050 and 3.1 billion in 2100.”.

With all this growth, it’s also anticipated there will be a significant increase in demand for caregiver support. However, given our current challenges to just support the ageing population we have now, how will we ever care for this projected growth? To try and combat this situation, the focus and demand for technology to help provide additional support is starting to increase. For example, we are now witnessing a field of service and companion robots starting to emerge.

As much as we may require this much needed support, there are some fundamental questions that need to also be considered as we introduce this new technology. In this post, Booming Encore’s Founder, Susan Williams examines a few of the technology service companions currently available and asks the question - Technology and Aging - Society’s Savior Or Demon?

[Learn More](#)



Elizabeth McCrillis, Ph.D.



Mark Skinner, Ph.D.



Amber Colibaba, M.A.

Bridge club vs. Buses: When is rural age-friendly not age-friendly?

Submitted by:
Elizabeth McCrillis, Ph.D.
Mark Skinner, Ph.D.
Amber Colibaba, M.A.
Trent University

Despite the tireless efforts of community organizations and volunteers in rural communities to implement age-friendly programs and initiatives, there is limited scope and reach of what these programs can achieve. According to the WHO, the eight domains of age-friendly cover a variety of social, health, and infrastructure topics at the policy level. When implemented effectively and sustainably, age-friendly should simply become a part of the environment in which citizens grow older (e.g. accessible public transportation, seniors housing), not exclusively something they physically engage with (e.g. bridge club, yoga classes). These simpler recreation interventions are often the necessary and inevitable outcome of the typically limited, terminal nature of age-friendly funding and downloading of state level responsibility onto the community. Although recreational programming supports active aging, the reach and scope of rural age-friendly programs is proving to be limited, with committees typically unable to make large-scale environmental change and recreational programming dominating the “age-friendly” landscape. This approach to implementation prevents those who require the most from an age-friendly environment (e.g. socially isolated seniors) from benefitting from available programs. As a result, age-friendly programs are theoretically beneficial; however, in reality they often lack the scope, reach and sustainability required to truly become age-friendly.

Age-Friendly Basque Country

Euskadi Lagunkoia -Age-friendly Basque Country - is a cross-cutting initiative launched by the Department of Employment and Social Policies of the Basque Country with the support of Matia Institute, with works with a number of communities across the Basque Country (65) to develop a network of age-friendly communities and facilitate the exchange of good practice between them.

All municipalities in the Network are grouped together in Promotion Groups in order to work on active participation by older people. These groups are looking to take part in the whole project process, from diagnosis through to implementation and assessment of actions.

Euskadi Lagunkoia has asked these Promotion Groups to tell us their experience of What does it mean to be age-friendly, and when is age-friendly not age-friendly? A call to take part in this participation process was sent out by email, with contributions received from four municipalities in the Network: Getxo, Durando, Azkoitia and Bilbao.

Age-Friendly Getxo



By Jorge Barrón.
Member of Getxo Lagunkoia Promotion Group.

Is friendliness a natural disposition to make friends? That's what the dictionary says, but, as is often the case with terms, this is of little use to us when we intend to load it with meaning in a given context.

For our cities, we want the universal value of friendliness, *friendliness for the global world*, for all humankind, even for our common home, planet Earth. Such a reflection on the real world around us could be considered extremely naïve or ignorant because, although our world holds a potential reserve of friendliness, there are other circumstances that brutally oppose the slightest attempt to make human coexistence more friendly.

There are great obstacles to overcome on the long road to utopia. We cannot simply avoid them, or isolate ourselves behind fences and barbed wire. We cannot simply ignore the post-colonial ghetto that knocks on the doors of opulence. We cannot simply share our home from a position of fierce individuality while ignoring our neighbours who are stigmatised by poverty, disease or social exclusion.

Nor is a friendly city compatible if it supports inhuman degrees of inequality, evicted families, older people abandoned to loneliness, or ghettos of immigrants in neighbourhoods or schools, and what about the geopolitical powers at play, defending the interests of the elites through threats, blockades or wars that destroy cities, schools and hospitals?

The road is long and the threats are immense. But utopia -the vision of friendly cities- is unassailable for those of us who hold it in their hearts. And I firmly believe it's in some corner of every heart. Putting all our efforts into this journey will surely overcome all the inconveniences and give meaning to our lives.

Age-Friendly Azkoitia



Joint reflection by
Azkoitia Lagunkoia
Promotion Group

If there's one thing that affects us all, it's the passage of time. If we live, we grow old. Overvaluing youth makes age seem negative and sad. At Azkoitia Lagunkoia we see old age as an opportunity. An invitation to take part in different initiatives such as healthy walks, internet courses, talks, etc. The aim is simply to live with the highest quality of life possible until the end of our lives. That is, to continue to be active and engaged in our communities and in our lives.

Age-Friendly Durango



Ciudad amigable con
las personas mayores

Jon Fernández.
Coordinator of
Durango Amigable.

I am the coordinator of Durango Amigable, I am 31 years old and I am writing this article to give a voice to older people, who are the soul of this project.

The other day, at one of our regular meetings, I explained to the 10 or so people who are the driving force behind this project that we had been commissioned to write an article expressing what we understood by age-friendliness. I suggested that they should write it themselves, but they simply waved their hands about with amusing disdain and immersed themselves in a nice conversation on the subject.

A lot of things were said. The importance of associations and of an environment without architectural barriers were discussed, stressing the need to decentralise public services in order to reach neighbourhoods on the periphery.

These and other good arguments were all put forward. But let me highlight just one of the answers. The answer given by a man who said that, for him, age-friendliness was something he had seen on a recent holiday: a newsstand, in the middle of a sunny square but with shady areas fitted out with benches, where older people came every day without fail to read some of the newspapers or magazines that were offered there free of charge.

Maybe that's what age-friendliness is: recognising the human needs of older people and providing the necessary spaces, tools or means for them to respond effectively to their needs independently and autonomously.

Age-Friendly Bilbao



M^a Asun Fernandez
Ostolaza. Member of
Age-Friendly Bilbao
Promotion Group

The friendliness of cities towards older people is well defined in WHO documents: "An inclusive, accessible urban environment that fosters active ageing".

There are good practices and experiences in all kinds of towns and cities on every continent. In Bilbao, with a population of 345,000 and an orography that has earned it the nickname "el botxo" or the hole surrounded by mountains, work on friendliness has its own particular specificities.

We are in the last phase of the part II Friendliness Plan, namely the evaluation part. And we are

the end of our days. Multiple factors such as the economy, housing, accessibility, family, social environment and participation have a large bearing on this. Our mission is to help all people enjoy their old age.

Loneliness is one of the scourges of the 21st century, and Azkoitia Lagunkoia wants to help ensure nobody feels alone. It is important to make society realise that older people, with their personal histories and experiences, constitute a social value that we must recognise, respect and take care of.

We can all play our part, and Azkoitia Lagunkoia offers the best forum for anybody wishing to promote active older age. We believe that determination and effort can change many things. A person travelling alone may arrive sooner, but a person who is accompanied will travel much further.

now ready for the third phase. Physical and structural aspects are a concern to the general public, the Friendliness Plan working group is particularly worried about the lack of green spaces, accessibility problems, traffic and pollution, architectural barriers in many homes, etc.

It is true that these most visible aspects have seen improvements over the last eight years, such as escalators, lifts, rest areas, more free-flowing traffic, and so on.

However, we are not making as much progress in more intangible aspects such as communication, information, transparency, social inclusion and participation.

We call for more attention for these aspects, along with greater consideration as active, relevant citizens.

City of Greater Sudbury Seniors Summit 2019



On March 26, 2018, the City of Greater Sudbury was recognized by The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario and The Honourable Dipika Dameria, Minister of Senior Affairs with a Category 1 - Age Friendly Community Recognition Award. The inaugural Provincial Award recognized the City's leadership in creating a welcoming community that enables seniors to live independent, active and healthy lives.

During the summer of 2018 both the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) endorsed the Government of Ontario's recognition and the City of Greater Sudbury was pre-approved to join the WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

According to the 2016 Census, The City of Greater Sudbury has a total population of 161,647, making us the 14th largest City in Ontario and the largest City in Central and Northern Ontario combined. We have a total of 127,337 residents 20 years of age and over, including 29,500 people 65 years of age and older, representing 23% of our adult population. The people aged 55 years and older number 53,190, equal to 42% of the total adult population.



Submitted by:
Robert Kirwan
Councillor for Ward 5
City of Greater Sudbury

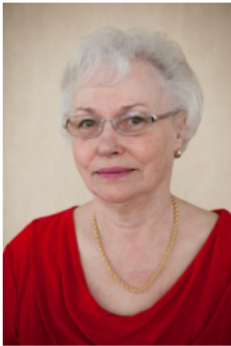
With such an aging population, the City of Greater Sudbury is fully committed to taking all of the necessary steps to seek and maintain formal Age-Friendly Status through the WHO. As one of our major initiatives during the fall of 2019, the Seniors Advisory Panel to the Mayor and Council will be hosting a special Seniors Summit 2019 on October 24, 2019. Over 400 senior citizens, caregivers, professional service providers, and residents of all ages who are concerned about meeting the needs of our older adults are expected to gather for a full day community conversation designed to identify the issues facing seniors, the practical solutions to address these issues, and develop a realistic plan of action that can be implemented to create an environment which will ensure a quality of life that our seniors deserve.

For more information on the City of Greater Sudbury's Age Friendly Strategy or the Seniors Advisory Panel, contact Sherri Moroso, Community Initiative & Engagement Coordinator at sherri.moroso@greatersudbury.ca or at 705-674-4455 Ext. 2449

What Can Go Wrong With Age Friendly Cities

Accessibility is a huge part of Age Friendly Communities for those who have mobility issues. The movement to provide accessible parking with room to dismount and enter from a van is a very positive step to ensure that people who need wheelchairs can participate in public events.

In our village, we have a short block on the main street where there are three such spots - two in front of the library and one on the opposite side of the street at the other end. What could go wrong? Statistically, it is doubtful that three people needing van space would be on that block at the same time. On the other hand, this is a community with many older adults with various degrees of frailty. People who are able to walk a short distance often do not have an accessibility sticker. Mobility issues can be stamina, recent injury or treatment/surgery for foot, knee and leg problems as well as the use of a walker. The library has a long ramp walkway, which is no problem when used by the healthy or by those with mobility aids, such as an electric scooter. But, having to park further away, and go up the long ramp, can be too much for those differently-abled, but not in possession of the parking sticker.



Submitted by:
Marguerite Oberle Thomas
Consultant Liaison
Fall Prevention Community
of Practice

This issue came to light for the author while dealing with a previous Achilles's heel problem and every second step being painful. Pain and shortness of breath may be stronger than the motivation for a long, stressful walk. Solutions could be to have a quicker turnaround for temporary stickers or for "Passenger" stickers whereby someone with limited mobility can travel with others and simply put the "Passenger" sticker in the front window when needed.

Marguerite Oberle Thomas, RN., BScN was a member of the Huron East (Ontario Canada) Age Friendly Community Committee. Thomas is the Consultant Liaison for the Fall Prevention Community of Practice, sponsored by the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation. Thomas is a senior, a former caregiver and an advocate to promote independence and quality of life for older adults.

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