



Public Health
Agency of Canada

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION BY PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

The '*Building Capacity*' project is a cross-Canada partnership between researchers at the University of British Columbia and Lakehead University, and members of the Westside Seniors Hub in Vancouver and the Northwest Dementia Working Group in Thunder Bay. This four-year project is one of the first to launch under the Public Health Agency of Canada and its new, federally funded Dementia Community Investment strategy.

At its core, the '*Building Capacity*' project aims to enable people living with dementia to participate in community life as full social citizens. The team uses a bottom-up, asset-based community development (ABCD) approach to support the growth of innovative community initiatives that will foster inclusion and reduce stigma by creating meaningful opportunities for people with dementia to remain active and socially connected.

While the project engages two distinct communities in BC and Ontario, together these communities unite under three shared objectives:

1. Implement an ABCD approach to adapt and create community programs and services that are meaningful and inclusive for people with dementia.
2. Conduct a developmental evaluation that will allow the team to learn how to best support the growth and integration of programs and services that are meaningful and inclusive for people with dementia.
3. Disseminate learnings to increase awareness and to support communities in their efforts to create opportunities for meaningful participation by people with dementia.

The '*Building Capacity*' project is not about community organizations developing a whole new set of separate programs and services for people with dementia. Rather, it is about figuring out a sustainable process for adapting and creating meaningful programs and services that are inclusive for people with dementia. We want more people with dementia to be active and participating in their community in a variety of ways, but more importantly, we want increased capacity in our communities so this kind of active participation can continue to grow and flourish.

Project Structure

The Vancouver site will be led by a partnership team of UBC researchers and members of the Westside Seniors Hub; the Thunder Bay site will be led by a partnership team of Lakehead researchers and members of the Northwest Dementia Working Group. While the two project sites will be focused on their local communities, there will be opportunities for knowledge exchange across the sites throughout the four years of the project. There will be a central project secretariat located at UBC that will be responsible for the overall evaluation, integration, and dissemination of project findings. While this a collaborative project from start to finish, we anticipate that community groups will hold primary responsibility for implementation with project support (e.g. information and communication resources, staff support, special event funding, etc.), and the researchers will hold primary responsibility for the evaluation component. There will be shared responsibility for dissemination (with significant project support).



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