

Public Information/Media Sheet

Older adults are a significant and growing part of the population of major Canadian cities¹, and adults 55 years + currently represent close to 25% of the residents of Toronto¹. By 2041, it is estimated that this number will double². Concurrent with national demographic changes are housing challenges, accelerated by increased costs associated with buying /maintaining homes³, and compounded by long wait times for retirement homes, long-term care and assisted-living residences. As such, there is a clear demographic imperative to address the needs of older Canadians to ensure that this large segment of the population of major cities, such as Toronto can maintain their health, wellbeing, and independence in housing that supports and meets their needs and preferences.

To address this, the Toronto HomeShare Pilot Project is a City of Toronto initiative arising out of the Toronto's Seniors Strategy, with funding from the Ontario Ministry of Seniors Affairs in May 2018. The National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE) is implementing the pilot in partnership with the City and the Toronto's Seniors Strategy Accountability Table, a group of seniors, caregivers, and other community partners dedicated to adequately and effectively supporting Toronto's aging population.

The purpose of the project is two-fold: First, it aims to support seniors wishing to age in their homes, through additional income, light supports with household chores, and companionship. Second, it is an innovative way to address the lack of affordable housing in the City, particularly among young adults (students). In exchange for reduced rent, the students agree to provide up to 5 hours per week contributing to the household. Through this intergenerational connection and shared housing, older adults may experience a decrease in social isolation and increased engagement with their communities. Students may also find that they experience isolation and stress. This project can help ease the financial burden of securing safe and affordable housing, allowing them to focus on their academic success and their future goals and aspirations.

A social worker facilitates the project, supporting all participants through the matching, move-in process, and after-hours contact.

To date the Toronto HomeShare Pilot Project has:

- Facilitated 10 Information sessions held at various locations across the city
- Hosted over 80 individuals at the scheduled Information Sessions
- Attended two housing fairs, engaging with over 100 students
- Completed 11 successful HomeShare Matches
- Collaborated with 10 organizations to design and implement the program
- Communicated with 15 community organizations regarding the program
- Completed 10 media appearances including: Globe and Mail, Toronto Star and CBC

The Toronto HomeShare Pilot Project continues to:

- Collaborate with Francophone community to facilitate 2 more matches
- Work with York University students to facilitate an evaluative survey for the project
- Engage in a review of evidence-based research regarding the effectiveness of HomeSharing
- Maintain regular contact with HomeShare matches to ensure success
- Work with the Seniors Accountability Table and report on the project's progress.
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For more information, contact:

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[1] Statistics Canada. (2017a). *Census Profile*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.

[2] Statistics Canada. (2017b). *Population Projections for Canada and its Regions*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.

[3] Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). (2018). *Housing Market Information*. Retrieved July 15, 2018 from: <https://www03.cmhc.schl.gc.ca/catalog/productList.cfm?cat=48&lang=en&fr=1531678874202>.

[4] Lord, S. (2017). *Canada's Lack of Long-term Care Space is Forcing Seniors As Far As 200 km from Home* (Online version). Retrieved July 15, 2018 from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/3873819/the-wait-for-long-term-care-space-is-forcing-seniors-asfar-as-200-km-from-home/>.