



To: Regional Council – Special Council Meeting
Meeting Date: October 5, 2023
From: Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services
Re: Proposed 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors – Additional Information

This memorandum provides Council with additional information to support the October 5, 2023 Special Council Meeting presentation and discussion on the proposed 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors (the Plan).

The purpose of the Special Council Meeting is to inform Council about the growing and diverse needs of York Region seniors and to allow time to discuss how the proposed directions and actions for the Plan aim to address them. The Plan will be tabled for Council consideration in early 2024. The agenda for the Special Council Meeting includes the following:

- An introduction and video capturing the voice of York Region seniors followed by a presentation from staff to set the context about who York Region seniors are and how the Plan responds to their needs
- Presentations from two keynote speakers – Dr. Samir Sinha from Sinai Health System and University Health Network in Toronto and the National Institute for Aging and Patrick Boily from the Ontario Community Support Association – who will provide additional context about the broader sector supporting seniors, highlighting best practices from other jurisdictions. Bios included in Appendix A
- Presentation from two key community partners – Christina Bisanz from CHATS and Gayle Seddon from the Southlake Community Ontario Health Team – who will present about the important role of community organizations and the need for continued collaboration across the health and social care continuum. Bios included in Appendix A
- Presentations from staff with details on the four priority areas, spotlighting key actions and how each will address the needs of York Region seniors

- The session will conclude with time for Council to discuss and ask questions about the proposed 2023 to 2027 Proposed Plan to Support Seniors.

Additional materials to support this discussion include:

- The [September 2022](#) communication to Council outlining the approach used to update the original [2016 York Region Seniors Strategy](#) (2016 Strategy)
- The [What You Said Report](#) and [What You Said Summary](#) that outline feedback from community engagement sessions
- An illustrative chart – [A York Region Perspective of Government Structures and Services that can Support Seniors](#) that outlines the complex system supporting seniors by level of government, and
- The proposed actions and advocacy items for the Plan (Appendix B)
- York Region programs and services that support seniors (Appendix C)

In the sections that follow, key demographics and trends are shared on York Region’s seniors population and are based on the [York Region 2021 Census](#) unless stated otherwise.

York Region’s seniors population is increasing rapidly and is expected to continue to grow over the next 30 years

The average age of York Region’s population was 41.4 years, up from 39.9 years in 2016. The population of York Region is aging at a rapid pace, with all five-year age groups above the age of 70 showing the highest growth rates in 2021. When looking across all the York Region age groups, the 70- to 74-year-olds showed the greatest increase from 2016 at 42.5%. This trend is mirrored across Canada, where the 70- to 74-year-olds also experienced the highest increase of 30% from 2016. In Ontario, this particular age group grew by 30.8%.

The share of the senior population in York Region accounted for a record high of 17% of the total population in 2021, up from 14.6% in 2016. In 2021, for the first time in history the number of York Region residents aged 65 and over exceeded the number of children younger than 15 years of age.

By 2051, York Region’s total seniors population is projected to more than double, meaning close to one in four (23%) York Region residents will be over the age of 65. The growing share of the overall population will also be made up of older seniors – those 75 years of age and older. In 2021, older seniors accounted for 7% of York Region’s total population, and by 2051, it is projected they will represent 14%.

Additional information can be found in the [York Region 2021 Census Age, Sex, Gender and Dwelling Type](#) Infographics and Bulletins.

Seniors are a diverse group with varied needs and have an age span of 65 years to 100 years +

All seniors are not the same, with varied needs based on individual experiences requiring different services at different times to help them stay healthier for longer. This diversity and variation in need must be considered when planning programs, services and supports for seniors. Younger seniors, those under the age of 75, are more likely to be working, generally healthier and wealthier than in decades past. Older seniors, those over the age of 75, are more likely to be living with one or more chronic condition, are experiencing more complex needs than younger seniors, tend to be at an increased risk of falling and may need to put more effort into maintaining their health. Seniors of any age experiencing frailty or other vulnerabilities will require different options to support them to remain as safe and independent as possible. The increasing needs of a growing seniors population that is more heavily weighted towards those over the age of 75, will place significant pressure on Regional programs and services.

York Region seniors are culturally and ethnically diverse

York Region seniors come from many diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds. In 2021, 76% of all seniors in York Region were immigrants to Canada, compared to only 43% in Ontario. Furthermore, about one-third (or 34%) of all York Region seniors were immigrants who came to Canada before 1980, compared to only about a quarter (or 24%) for Ontario.

Between 2016 and 2021, approximately 5,400 new seniors arrived in York Region as immigrants, representing only 10% of all recent immigrants to the Region. This number dropped significantly due to COVID restrictions but is expected to return to pre-pandemic levels in the next couple of years.

Almost half (45%) of seniors reported belonging to a racialized group in 2021, with 51% identifying as Chinese.

In 2021, the top 5 non-official languages most often spoken at home by seniors in York Region were Cantonese, Italian, Mandarin, Russian and Tamil. Almost 18% of York Region seniors spoke neither English nor French. These figures highlight the need to recognize cultural and language opportunities and potential challenges for engaging and supporting seniors from diverse backgrounds.

Additional information can be found in [York Region 2021 Census Language](#) Infographics and Bulletins.

York Region seniors are generally financially stable, however the proportion of seniors living in low-income is growing

In 2021, the low-income rate for seniors living in York Region was 12.2% up from 11.3% reported in the 2016 Census. In comparison, the 2021 low-income rates for seniors in Ontario and Canada were at 12.2% and 15.1%, respectively.

Additional information can be found in [York Region 2021 Census Income](#) Infographics and Bulletins.

The proportion of seniors in York Region living with low-income has been increasing over time. In 2010 the proportion of seniors was 13.6%; in 2015 it grew to 20.7% and in 2020 it was 24%, or almost one-quarter of all York Region residents living with low-income (Source: Taxfilers Data). This trend is likely to continue as seniors continue to be the fastest growing age group in the Region.

However, when considering Environics Analytics liquid assets data from 2022, across all income groups and age brackets, York Region household maintainers aged 45 and over have a higher dollar value of liquid assets in comparison to the overall averages of their counterparts in Ontario. Additionally, this data showed York Region's low-income senior household maintainers (those aged 65 and over with household income less than \$39,999) are better off compared to York Region's low-income household maintainers who are in the 45-54 and 55-64 age categories when considering liquid assets.

The 2021 Census shows that 18% of York Region seniors were still in the labour force. This is comparable to the 16% of seniors in Ontario who reported being in the labour force and is a very slight increase from the 17% reported in the 2016 Census. This is in line with a national trend that has seen labour force participation by seniors rise steadily over the past decades.

The majority of York Region seniors live in the community, and many are homeowners

Over time, seniors housing needs can change. In planning for an aging population, it is important to understand seniors current housing and living arrangements, and preferences to promote awareness for accessible and affordable senior friendly housing options.

About 97% of seniors in York Region live in private dwellings – or are living in the community – with the remaining 3% living in collective dwellings that include long-term care and retirement homes. Older seniors are more likely to live in collective dwellings than younger seniors, with 63% in collective dwellings being 85 years and over.

Of those seniors living in the community, 89% of York Region's seniors live in households that are owned and 11% live in households that are rented, of which 19% are subsidized units. Of those homeowner households, 36% are still maintaining a mortgage.

It is not just York Region seniors who want to age at home. In fact, the latest Census shows that 94% of Canadians aged 65 and up and 95% in Ontario are living in their own or rented private homes.

Housing affordability is more of an issue for seniors who are living in renter households with 47% spending 30% or more of household income on shelter. As housing affordability continues to be a challenge in York Region, this is an issue that will remain a concern for seniors.

Of all seniors aged 65+, there are 14% that live alone and another 9.7% that live with other relatives. Looking at the population aged 85 years and over, there are 26.4% living alone and another 22.3% who live with other relatives. As the older population continues to grow, more seniors will be living alone, and at greater risk of social isolation and frailty concerns.

With increasing numbers and increasing longevity, an aging population will require more senior-friendly supports and services to age in place

The [November 2020](#) Forecast for Long-Term Care and Seniors' Housing Implications Council report highlights the implications of this growth and the urgent need for more long-term care beds, affordable and accessible senior-friendly housing options and age-friendly communities.

Long waitlists for assisted living and long-term care homes often result in seniors with growing needs living unsupported in the community for longer than they should. In these cases, it is not uncommon for seniors to call 911 for non-emergency issues. In the absence of other suitable options, many end up in hospital, often too frail or unable to return home. Gaps and fragmentation in the system can drive use and costs for emergency services to levels that are both unnecessary and unsustainable, placing significant pressure on Regional programs and services.

The [November 2020](#) Council update on the 10-Year Paramedic Services Resources and Facilities Master Plan identified that in 2031 the demand for Paramedic Services is forecasted to increase by 119% over 2021 levels, largely driven by seniors. Through the implementation of the Council approved [2021-2031 Paramedic Services Master Plan](#), the Region is looking to address the predicted impact of an aging population through innovative approaches to paramedic services including, but not limited to increased staffing, related equipment and seeking Provincial approval and investment for innovative models of care and expansion of out-of-hospital programs like community paramedicine.

The growing needs of seniors across the broader health and social care continuum, and needs of those who partner in their care, are similarly impacting other Regional programs and services including residential long-term care, public health, community supports, affordable housing, and transportation. To address these pressures and the desire of seniors to age in place in their preferred communities, better communication, coordination innovation and investment across the broader system supporting seniors is required. Since much of the system that impacts seniors is not delivered by the Region, this will require the Region to continue to work collaboratively with partners and develop a focused advocacy agenda to foster the change that is needed at other levels of government.

The Region is one of many players in a complex landscape of services that are delivered to seniors and their caregivers

Seniors and caregivers must navigate through many different agencies and government bodies to find, and access needed programs and services. This illustrative chart – [A York Region Perspective of Government Structures and Services that can Support Seniors](#) – demonstrates

at a high level the complexity of the broader system offering supports for seniors. It highlights the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government involved in the system but does not capture the extensive and important role of the community sector and non-governmental organizations, nor the nuances of funding, delivery, and cost sharing involved.

While the Region offers important programs, the majority of health and community services that support seniors are delivered by other organizations and levels of government. For example, of the 51 adult day programs that serve York Region seniors and caregivers, the Region runs five. Similarly, of the 29 long term care homes in York Region, the Region operates two. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Long-Term Care set the policies, guidelines and funding for the home and community care sector and the long-term care sector respectively.

While integrated systems are considered ideal, currently, there is no overarching coordinating body with the responsibility to fund, plan, and improve seniors services across a continuum of need. Services that support seniors health and well-being are the responsibility of different levels and branches of government. Consequently, the delivery of programs and services is fragmented across health care, home and community care, long-term care, and municipal and regional programs. In contrast, a coordinating body like a “service system manager” who oversees the planning, managing, funding and eligibility criteria for social services as seen with income support, children’s services, social housing, and homelessness programs, can provide better navigation supports across a range of independent yet often interconnected and mutually beneficial services and supports.

In an ideal system there would be a “coordinating body” to support communication and navigation amongst system components and access to services. The Region has been [advocating](#) for the province to take leadership to drive system improvements and lessen the navigation burden on seniors while also identifying and addressing gaps.

The 2016 York Region Seniors Strategy defined the Region’s role in serving seniors

With no one area holding responsibility for seniors – even within the corporate Regional structure – it was important to ensure all areas of the corporation were considering the needs of seniors in their planning and delivery of programs and services in an integrated, coordinated way.

In [November 2016](#), Regional Council approved the [York Region Seniors Strategy](#) to guide collaborative corporate planning activities and better integrate programs and services under the direct control of York Region. In preparing for the growing and aging York Region population, the 2016 Strategy’s vision aimed to support seniors to age in place, that is to live in the home or community of their choice for as long as they are able. The Strategy set the corporate direction for internal staff identifying where to focus efforts and resources to take action and where to advocate for others to take action when the Region does not have a role to play.

The proposed 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors builds on the foundation of the 2016 Seniors Strategy

Since launching the [York Region Seniors Strategy: Thinking Ahead](#) in 2016, significant progress has been made for seniors by working collaboratively across the corporation, with local municipalities, and partners in the community.

Details on the actions, advocacy and related key accomplishments from the 2016 Strategy were communicated to Council in the [September 2022 memo Attachment 1](#).

After several years of implementation, the 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors will provide an update to the 2016 Strategy and include a new set of focused actions that build on the successes of “Thinking Ahead“. Through both actions and advocacy, the 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors, will advance opportunities that enhance the health and well-being of our aging population and their ability to age in the right place for their individual needs and circumstances. The plan will be updated in four-year increments to coincide with each new term of Council.

A comprehensive engagement process has informed the proposed 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors

To ensure the updated Plan reflects current needs and future opportunities to support seniors, staff assessed progress to date, conducted research on emerging issues affecting seniors, and, in the Fall of 2021 (from November 2021 to January 2022), engaged seniors, pre-seniors (ages 55 to 64), caregivers, and staff from York Region and senior serving organizations. Pandemic restrictions at the time required virtual engagements, and additional validation sessions were held in the Fall of 2022 that included in-person, telephone, and online options to reach equity-deserving groups that we may not have heard from during the initial engagements. Combined, this information was used to validate the direction of the updated Plan and inform actions to be implemented over the next four years.

Key learnings from these engagements include:

- **Improving systems navigation** is necessary to make it easier for seniors to find and access information earlier in the health and social care continuum
- Seniors need **better access to home and community care services and adequate levels of support** to stay independent longer
- Seniors **need affordable and appropriate housing options** to support them to age in the right place for their needs and circumstances
- We need to **support technology access and training** to connect seniors to people, programs, information and services

- We need to apply an **equity lens** to address gaps in the system that are creating barriers for many seniors. This includes access to technology and basic digital literacy, transit service options and easily accessible information about supports

Further details about the results of these engagements are available on the [Renewing Our Plan for Seniors](#) webpage in a [What You Said Report](#) and [What You Said Summary](#).

Research on system gaps and emerging issues affecting seniors was used to inform the Plan to Support Seniors

In the initial stages of the Plan’s development, staff conducted academic and grey literature scans on emerging issues affecting seniors to identify the gaps, capabilities and limitations of the current system supporting seniors and to explore the dynamics that impact seniors as they age. Many of the key findings and themes identified through the research were echoed in the engagement sessions held to inform the updated Plan.

A major theme emerging from the research, discussed more in Queen’s University, “[Ageing Well](#)”, the National Institute on Ageing, “[Enabling the Future Provision of Long-Term Care in Canada](#)”, and other literature is that seniors want to live in their current home or community as long as possible and want to be able to easily access the right supports at the right time. Research by the Canadian Institute on Health and Information, “[Common Challenges, Shared Priorities](#)” also identified that poor integration of services, unaffordable programs, and services that are not responsive to changing needs are common factors that prevent access to appropriate services. These challenges were also raised by engagement participants.

Approaches identified in the research to improve access to services and support aging in the right place reflecting people’s needs, circumstances and preferences include:

- Improving communication and navigation supports around services, programs, and healthy aging information to ensure seniors access the right information at the right time
- Integrating services to simplify the system for seniors facing declining health literacy or those with limited technology access or skills
- Applying an equity lens to program planning to help address equity related barriers seniors face such as living in under-served communities, living in low-income, or lacking English language skills

Four Priority Areas and an objective for each establish the proposed directions for the 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors

As noted in the [September 2022](#) memo, the findings from the engagements and research confirmed three of the 2016 Strategy’s four Priority Areas should continue and a new one was added that focuses on the better coordination of the overall system supporting seniors. There

was also agreement in the engagements to add a focused objective to each Priority Area for a more targeted approach with tangible actions to be implemented over the next four years.

Table 1 summarizes the proposed directions for the 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors.

Table 1
Proposed Directions for the 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors

Priority Area and Objective	Region’s Role
<p>Keeping Seniors Healthier, Longer</p> <p>Objective: to provide seniors, caregivers and staff information that helps seniors improve physical activity and social connectedness and slow decline or prevent chronic disease</p>	<p>Providing seniors with the information they need can decrease social isolation and chronic diseases. The Region will provide programs that are proactive and reach seniors to avoid or mitigate potential crisis.</p>
<p>Supporting Seniors to Live in Age-Friendly Complete Communities</p> <p>Objective: to better integrate services for seniors</p>	<p>Integrating services across the continuum of health and social care services is key to supporting seniors. This will require improvement in services such as more and better housing options, financial supports, resources in the community, home and community care and better supports for caregivers. The Region will advocate to provincial and federal governments, for better collaboration on innovative and integrated models to achieve successful health and social care outcomes.</p>
<p>Connecting Seniors and Caregivers to the Right Programs and Services at the Right Time</p> <p>Objective: to improve system navigation for seniors</p>	<p>Making the system easier to navigate, especially for older seniors who may have more serious health issues, fewer social connections and potential challenges with technology, leads to better outcomes for individuals and the system as a whole. The Region, through Access York and in collaboration with community partners, has an important role to play to improve</p>

Priority Area and Objective	Region’s Role
	navigation systems which will improve the lives of seniors.
Improving the Coordination, Organization and Planning of Services for Seniors (new)	The system serving seniors is fragmented and delivered by many different players. The Region, as one of many players in this system, will:
Objective: to better collaborate on and support strategic improvements for the overall system supporting seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advocate for better coordination of the services provided to seniors • work to improve the delivery of our own programs and services for seniors, and • collaborate with and, where possible, build the capacity of community partners

For each Priority Area, the Plan identifies a set of actions and an advocacy agenda to be carried out over the next four years to lead towards improvements and positive change for seniors living in York Region. Any costs for actions to be recommended when the Plan moves forward for consideration in 2024 will take budget implications into consideration. Refer to Appendix B: Proposed 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors Actions and Advocacy Agenda for further details.

The proposed Plan to Support Seniors supports the Healthy Communities priority of the York Region 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan

The Healthy Communities priority in the [2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan](#) focuses on the livability, health, safety and social well-being of the Region’s residents through improved access to health and social support services. The Plan will help provide seniors with information to help them age in the right place for their needs and circumstances and connect them with the support they need to improve their health and prevent crisis.

Collaboration with partners and innovative solutions will be key to keeping seniors safe and supported as they age

The proposed directions of the 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors remain committed to seniors in York Region and those that partner in their care. To support the growing and changing needs of seniors the Region looks forward to ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders and continued opportunities to innovate, collaborate and advocate with local municipalities, community partners and other levels of government towards a more coordinated and integrated continuum of health and social care for our aging population.

For more information on this memo, please contact Lisa Gonsalves, General Manager at 1-877-464-9675 ext.72090. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.



Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services



Bruce Macgregor
Chief Administrative Officer

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Appendix A – Bios for Keynote Speakers and Community Partner Presenters
Appendix B – Proposed 2023 to 2027 Plan to Support Seniors Actions and Advocacy Agenda
Appendix C – York Region Programs and Services for Seniors

APPENDIX A

BIO: Dr. Samir K. Sinha MD, DPhil, FRCPC, FCAHS, AGSF

Dr. Samir Sinha is the Director of Geriatrics at Sinai Health System and the University Health Network in Toronto, a Professor of Medicine at the University of Toronto, a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences, and the Director of Health Policy Research at Toronto Metropolitan University's National Institute on Ageing.

A Rhodes Scholar, Samir is a highly regarded clinician and international expert in the care of older adults. In 2021, he was appointed to serve as a member of the Government of Canada's National Seniors Council and recently led the successful development of Canada's new National Long-Term Care Services Standard.

BIO: Patrick Boily, Director of Policy, Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA)

Patrick Boily is the Director of Policy at the Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA). In this role, he leads the development and implementation of OCSA's advocacy, government relations, public policy and stakeholder engagement agenda.

He previously worked as the French Language Services Coordinator and Aboriginal Health Consultant for the Central West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). Prior to working at the LHIN, he worked in francophone health service development as Health Service Planning Agent for Entité 3, one of the province's French Language Health Planning Entities.

Patrick has a BA from McGill University and a Master's in Public and International Affairs from York University. Patrick holds the Certified Association Executive designation, has completed the Rotman Health Leadership Program and HealthCareCAN's Health Service Management Certificate.

BIO: Christina Bisanz, Chief Executive Officer, Community and Home Assistance to Seniors

Christina Bisanz is the Chief Executive Officer of CHATS – Community and Home Assistance to Seniors, leading a team of over 320 staff and nearly 500 volunteers, supporting the health and well-being of some 8,500 seniors and their family caregivers throughout York Region, and South Simcoe.

Currently, Christina represents CHATS on several health system planning groups. She is the founding co-chair of the Joint Executive Steering Committee of the Southlake Community Ontario Health Team (SCOHT) and chairs the SCOHT Community Support

Sector Network Table, is a member of the Collaboration Council of the Western York Region OHT, the Eastern York Region North Durham OHT Home and Community Sector Network Table, and the Ontario Health Central CSS Advisory Table. Christina is also a member of the York Region Human Services Planning Board.

BIO: Gayle Seddon, Director, Southlake Community Ontario Health Team

Gayle Seddon is the Director of the Southlake Community Ontario Health Team, Southlake@home program, Hospice Palliative Care Teams, Nurse Led Outreach Team, and the Elden Transitional Program at Southlake Regional Health Centre.

Gayle joined Southlake in December 2018. She is an award-winning Certified Health Care Executive with a track record for driving innovation and using evidence-based methods to achieve ambitious results. As a dynamic leader with a particular strength in developing initiatives between acute care and community care, Gayle's passion and expertise to build strong, collaborative partnerships helps to support innovation and improvements to the quality of care, patient and provider experience, and health system performance. and in optimizing patient flow.

With a background in Nursing, over 20 years as a healthcare leader in acute care hospitals, home and community care, and government entities, Gayle has successfully navigated the rapidly changing healthcare landscape by responding with vision. She engages partners and rallies them around common goals to achieve sustainable outcomes across the spectrum of service, quality, and excellence.

**Proposed 2023 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors
Actions and Advocacy Agenda**

Keeping Seniors Healthier, Longer

To provide seniors, caregivers and staff information that helps seniors improve physical activity and social connectedness and slow decline or prevent chronic disease

Action/Advocacy	Outcome
Communicate information on healthy aging to raise awareness with seniors, caregivers and staff to help seniors stay healthy and connected	Seniors provided with information to improve their health/well-being and promote better access to information and services
Communicate information on Public Works services to raise awareness with seniors, caregivers and staff to help seniors stay healthy and connected	
Advocate to the Province for annual health professional in-home or supported virtual visits for seniors 75 years of age and over	Seniors are connected to services to support them to live well and age in the right place

Supporting Seniors to Live in Age-Friendly Complete Communities

To better integrate services for seniors

Action/Advocacy	Outcome
Complete design, construction and operationalize the seniors hub and community centre in Unionville Commons HYI building	Improved access to services to support health, well-being and enable seniors to age in the right place
Develop policies and programs that link the built environment to healthy aging	Improved health and well-being of seniors through the built environment
Deliver paramedic and community paramedicine services to support seniors in the community	Individuals supported in their homes for as long as possible through preventative and responsive care
Engage with seniors' networks to support development of the Affordable Private Market Housing Implementation Plan (AHIP)	Worked with partners to increase the supply of affordable private market housing that seniors would have opportunity to access

Action/Advocacy	Outcome
Explore opportunities to enhance and continue programs that support seniors' access to York Region Transit (YRT)	Provided more equitable access to transportation
Advocate for improvement of policy planning and funding across a supportive seniors continuum of health and social care	Improved program delivery and policy planning for advancing seniors' needs in their communities
Advocate for sustainable funding to expand Community Paramedicine programs	Individuals supported in their homes for as long as possible through preventative and responsive care

Connecting Seniors and Caregivers to the Right Programs and Services at the Right Time

To improve system navigation for seniors

Action/Advocacy	Outcome
Promote Access York to seniors and caregivers as a central access point for York Region and community resources	Connected seniors and caregivers in need with the appropriate services
Advance an accessible seniors focused self-serve tool on York Region website to search for York Region and community resources	
Share knowledge and training on seniors specific resources on York Region navigation tools with regional staff and local municipalities	
Collaborate with Ontario Health Team Partners to develop an access and navigation model for a seamless approach to customer information and referrals	
Develop a York Region specific navigation guide for seniors	

Action/Advocacy	Outcome
Help connect subsidized housing wait list applicants, including seniors, to available programs and resources while they wait for housing	Seniors (60+) on the subsidized housing wait list were supported to connect to financial benefits and resources to which they are entitled, supporting income stabilization and providing resources while they wait for subsidized housing options
Incorporate a seniors lens in collective action planning that will be undertaken to support development and implementation of the proposed York Region 2023 to 2026 Newcomer Inclusion Plan	Strengthened processes for seniors lens in newcomer-focused community planning and implementation to reflect their needs
Expand broadband infrastructure in York Region (YorkNet)	Supported seniors to stay connected through better access to digital information and improved connectivity
Promote and collaborate with organizations that provide digital access/technology and technology training for seniors	
Advocate for provincial investments to sustain, scale and spread programs and supports that enhance seniors access to digital technology	Supported seniors to stay connected through better access to digital information and improved connectivity

Improving the Coordination, Organization and Planning of Services for Seniors

To better collaborate on and support strategic improvements for the overall system supporting seniors

Action/Advocacy	Outcome
Implement the York Region Integrated Response for Vulnerable Seniors Network (VSN) Pilot	Stabilized vulnerable seniors in immediate crisis, including those experiencing homelessness, with needs-based solutions, wrap-around care and harm-reduction approaches to minimize the potential for future crises
Evaluate VSN and share learnings York Region wide	Regional services aligned with client needs

Action/Advocacy	Outcome
Develop tools and products that allow sector stakeholders access to current evidence and data on York Region seniors to inform program planning	Supported evidence-based decision making
Provide capacity building opportunities to long-term care home staff and community partners serving seniors and caregivers	Staff serving seniors and caregivers feel more equipped to support their needs
Advocate to Province to establish a service system manager for seniors programs and services	Improved coordination of the currently fragmented seniors services sector

York Region's Programs and Services for Seniors

York Region provides a broad range of services to promote the health, well-being, safety and independence of seniors living in the Region. Programs and services to support seniors include the following:

Access York

- [Access York Contact Centre](#): for more information about York Region programs and services and how to access them, visit york.ca, call 1-877-464-9675 (interpreter services available), TTY 1-866-512-6228 (for deaf and hard of hearing) or email accessyork@york.ca

Seniors Services

- [Long Term Care](#): York Region's two long-term care homes – Newmarket Health Centre and Maple Health Centre – provide nursing and personal care services for adults who are no longer able to live in their own homes. Visit the [\(Central\) Home and Community Care Support Services](#) website to learn about eligibility, how to apply and costs. Telephone: 1-888-470-2222
- [Adult Day Programs](#): provide meaningful and stimulating daily activities, exercises and food to meet the social, physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs of our clients in a secure environment. Visit the [\(Central\) Home and Community Care Support Services](#) website to learn about eligibility, how to apply and costs. Telephone: 1-888-470-2222

Paramedic Services

- [Paramedic Services](#): provide emergency and non-emergency medical response to patients. Community paramedicine programs like CP@LTC support seniors to stay at home and avoid premature placement in LTC, avoid emergency calls or a return to hospital
- [Personal Medical Information Kits](#): can help seniors organize their important medical and personal information. The kit is designed to be visible and easily accessible by paramedics or other emergency services.

Public Health

- [Healthy Aging and Fall Prevention](#): provides consultations, workshops, and displays on fall prevention and healthy aging targeting adults 55 years and older living in York Region.
- [Seniors Dental Program](#): York Region is working to provide the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program to eligible residents.
- [Food Safety for Older Adults](#): explains the importance of reducing the risk of food-borne illness

- [Air Quality Health Index](#): explains how air pollution affects your health and especially for seniors
- [Extreme Heat](#): provide warnings about extreme heat events and precautions to prevent related health impacts (seniors are at increased risk)
- [Outbreak Management](#): to prevent and decrease illness in long-term care facilities and retirement homes and other congregate care settings where seniors may live
- [Immunizations](#): provide COVID-19 and Flu immunization at community clinics for seniors and others and support COVID-19 and Flu immunization in long-term care facilities, retirement homes and other congregate care settings where seniors live.
- [Healthy Built Environment](#): Provides support to planners on how community planning can support health, including development of Age Friendly Communities.

Housing Services

- [Community Housing](#): offers market rent and subsidized housing to residents in York Region through housing providers including Housing York Inc. and non-profit and co-operative organizations.
- [Subsidized Housing Wait List](#): York Region manages a centralized waiting list to allocate subsidized units in community housing, rent supplement units with private market landlords, and portable housing benefits to help pay market rent.
- [Client Intervention and Support Services \(CISS\)](#): can help older adults delay or avoid placement in long-term care by providing in-home assessments, case management, counselling, referrals, psychoeducation and support advocating for a client's needs

Finance

- [Property Tax rebates, reductions and relief programs](#): including deferred property tax increases for low-income seniors and persons with disabilities and property tax relief in the event of extraordinary circumstances. Contact your local municipality for more information

Social Services

- [Housing with Supports Program](#): offers daily supports, including lodging, meals, etc., to low-income residents who have a mental health diagnosis or are elderly and frail and are unable to live independently
- [Homemakers and Nurses Services Program](#): provides homemaking services and foot care to low-income residents so they can remain in their homes when they have a temporary or permanent illness or disability
- [Emergency and Transitional Housing](#): York Region provides oversight and operational funding for nine emergency and transitional housing facilities delivered by community agencies that offer temporary housing, drop-in/drop-by services, case management, life stabilization support, and assistance to develop individual housing plans.

Public Works

- [Accessible Transit Services](#): York Region Transit (includes conventional, bus rapid transit, and Mobility On-Request paratransit) provides accessible transit services in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Some accessible features include kneeling buses with ramp or lift for easy boarding, slip resistant floors, automated next stops announcements, and priority seating close to the operator
- [Support Person Assistance Card](#): permits a support person to travel on YRT with the eligible customer (cardholder) at no additional cost
- [Discounted YRT Seniors Fare](#): seniors aged 65+ are eligible for the senior fare when purchasing a monthly pass or paying with PRESTO or YRT Pay/Transit App
- [Mobility On-Request Transit Services 65+](#): provides on-request transit service for seniors 65 years and older, within 5 km of their home. This service is offered throughout York Region for seniors who want to try taking public transit using a smaller vehicle that picks seniors up at home
- [MyRide Travel Training](#): provides travel training for customers of all ages and abilities who need additional knowledge and skills to use YRT independently
- [Outdoor Education for 55+](#): programs designed to connect people with nature and inspire action
- [York Regional Forest Accessible Trails](#): four trails accessible to wheelchairs, strollers and other assistive devices that are wider, clear of large obstructions and graded for ease-of-movement

York Regional Police

- [Community Safety Officers](#): provide information on programs and services for seniors, deliver educational presentations and are there to support seniors in our community.
- [Vulnerable Persons Registry](#): allows residents to register with York Regional Police to allow for an improved police response for those who may require emergency assistance due to their condition.
- [Project Lifesaver Program](#): combines radio technology with a coordinated police response to locate wandering people and/or disoriented persons due to Alzheimer's or other conditions or disorders.

For more information about these services please contact Access York at 1-877-464-9675 (interpreter services available), TTY 1-866-512-6228 (for deaf and hard of hearing) or email accessyork@york.ca