



Healthy Aging
Alberta Summit 2023



Summary Report

Healthy Aging- Alberta Summit, October 10-12, 2023

REIMAGINING AGING: Leading the Way for An Integrated Approach



A network of
community allies
for older adults.



ALBERTA ASSOCIATION
ON GERONTOLOGY
Improving the Lives of Older Albertans



Land Acknowledgement

Healthy Aging Alberta and Alberta Association on Gerontology would like to honour the truth of the shared history and acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations.

We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us.

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Introduction

Healthy Aging Alberta (HAA) and the Alberta Association on Gerontology (AAG) are pleased to present the summary report of the [Healthy Aging - Alberta Summit](#), **REIMAGINING AGING: Leading the Way for an Integrated Approach**, held on October 10-12, 2023. This event was held in Calgary at the Deerfoot Inn and Casino, hosted by [Healthy Aging Alberta \(HAA\)](#), powered by [United Way of Calgary and Area \(UWCA\)](#), in collaboration with the [Alberta Association on Gerontology \(AAG\)](#).

This report provides an overview of this unique undertaking, acknowledgment of sponsors, overview of impact, and program highlights. It ends with "what's next" in advancing a culture and community for change for integrated community-focused services in Alberta.

Thought Leadership: Summit Design

Alberta has an ambitious plan to change the way we think about a future of healthy aging and quality of life for older Albertans. (*MNP Report, vision, p 42*)

Moving toward an integrated system of community-focused services requires many individuals who can share perspectives and the motivation to move to that desired future. The Summit provided a unique opportunity to create an environment of thought leadership through a unique partnership between HAA and AAG, both supporting Alberta's transformational journey through stakeholder engagement, provincial collaboration, and sharing information and practices.

Thought leadership "involves generating innovative ideas, insights, and opinions and sharing them with others to influence, inspire and lead the industry or community." (*Thought Leadership: Meaning, Strategies and Examples*) This theme underpinned the design and implementation of the three-day Summit.

The Summit brought together two initiatives for October 2023:

1. **Alberta Association on Gerontology (AAG)** had been planning a Webinar for a cross-sector audience. The Webinar related to "Healthy Aging in a Future of Longevity." Funds had been received from Alberta Health under the *Culture Change Project* to support this initiative.
2. **Healthy Aging Alberta (HAA)** had been planning their first in-person Summit, supported by the Government of Alberta and UWCA, to bring together representatives from community-based organizations across the province.

The result was a 3-day Summit focused on creating an environment for thought leadership, collaborative learning, and visibility of the community-based senior serving (CBSS) sector connected with colleagues from the housing and health sectors. It also united government representatives from the *Ministries of Health and Seniors, Community and Social Services*, and local municipalities. It provided a space for provincial discussion on sector-relevant issues and challenges, promising service delivery models, and policies for systems transformation to better support older adults aging in the community. It provided quality sessions, offered attendees a valuable and memorable learning experience, and catalyzed action.



The following factors defined the Summit experience:

- A hybrid event, enhancing reach across the province while preserving the gains of in-person attendance, a desire of organizations post-pandemic
- Program design, with the first day focusing on reimagining aging (the facts and our values and beliefs), followed by two days of promising practices
- Motivating speakers representing promising local, provincial, and international practices
- Stimulating the exchange of ideas and cross-sector collaboration
- Cross-sectoral attendance
- Amplification and raising the visibility of the CBSS sector
- Cross-pollination of ideas for innovation and systems change/design
- Inspiration to take back to Albertan and Canadian communities

The event provided a provincial platform for critical conversations related to the goal of aging well. It brought people together towards a united purpose of making Alberta one of the best places to grow older through the coordination and integration of community-based services.

Acknowledgements

HAA and AAG would like to thank all the sponsors, donors, and exhibitors whose contributions made this event possible.

Supporters:



Ten Event Sponsors:



Twenty exhibitors supported the event through the provision of relevant resources and increased sector networking:

2 Resolve Conflict Services
Alberta Gerontology Nurses Association
Alzheimer Calgary
Canada Revenue Agency
Canadian Accreditation Council
Caregivers Alberta
Caregiver Centered Care
CHARTWELL Retirement Residences
COURAGE -Covenant Health
Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council

Genesis Centre
Healthy Quality Council of Alberta
Hear Canada
HelpAge Canada
Kimberly Fraser Author
Palliative Institute - Covenant Health
Sage Seniors Association
NARCHA
Norquest College
Sunshine Connected



HAA and AAG would like to extend a very special thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time to make the Summit a reality. A special acknowledgement goes to HAA's [Community Leadership Council](#) members and the AAG Board Members, who have devoted countless hours and invaluable expertise to making this work's success possible.

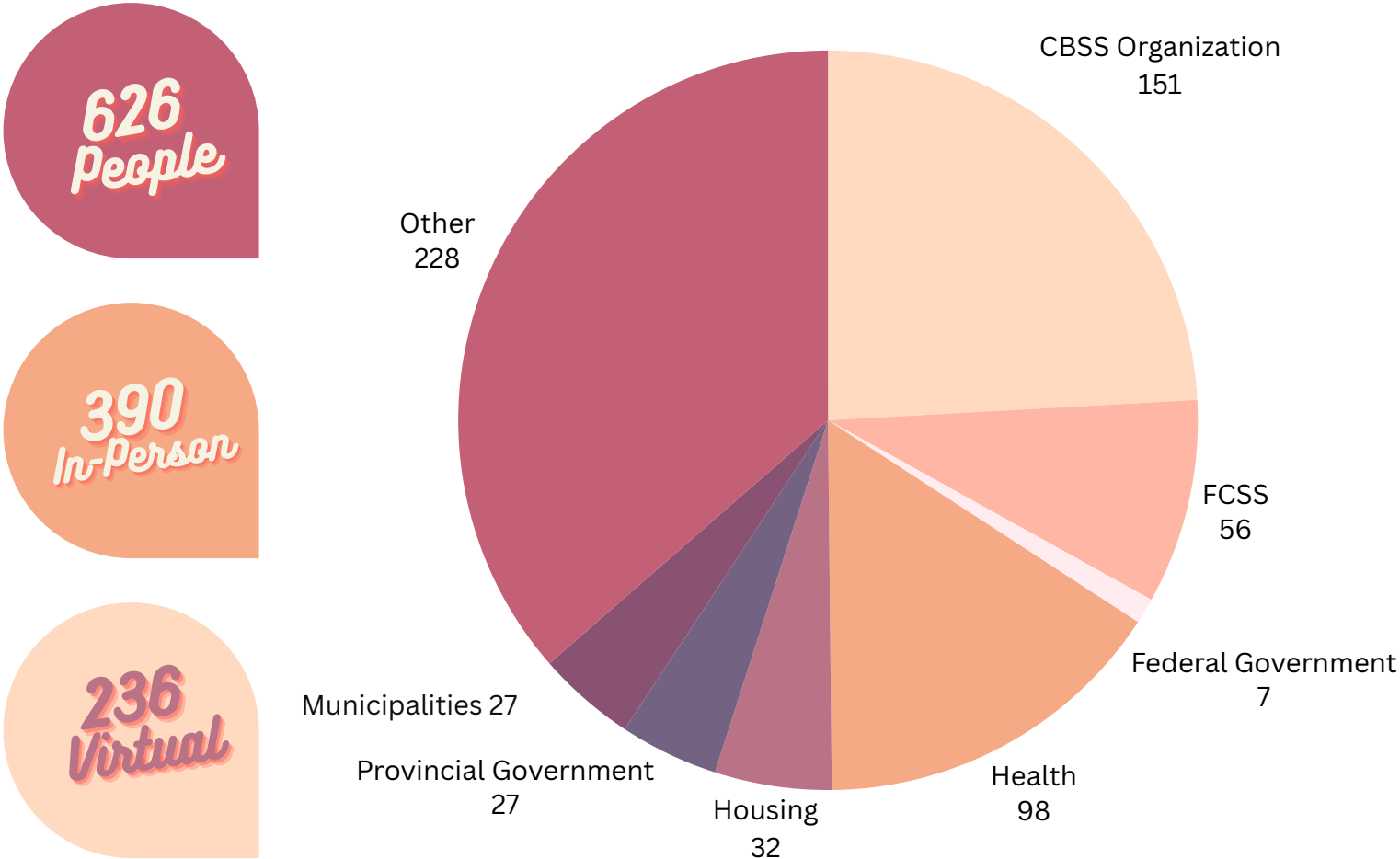
Summit Reach

The whole Summit was offered in a hybrid format on [Vfairs](#). All sessions were broadcast to the digital audience in real time, with opportunities for live chat. The virtual platform provided an interactive space that brought attendees into the event. Virtual attendees could interact with each other, the sponsor and exhibitor booths, and download resources. All the session recordings and resources were available on the Vfairs platform so that all attendees (both in person and virtual) for three months after the Summit.

The Summit achieved excellent reach, both in number of participants and diversity of attendees:

- Over **626 people** attended - **390 in-person** and over **236 virtual** participants, with additional watch parties from across the province.
- Representatives from across Alberta and Canada attended, including CBSS organizations, the Health and Housing sectors, government representatives from various municipalities and provincial ministries, FCSS staff, and private service providers.

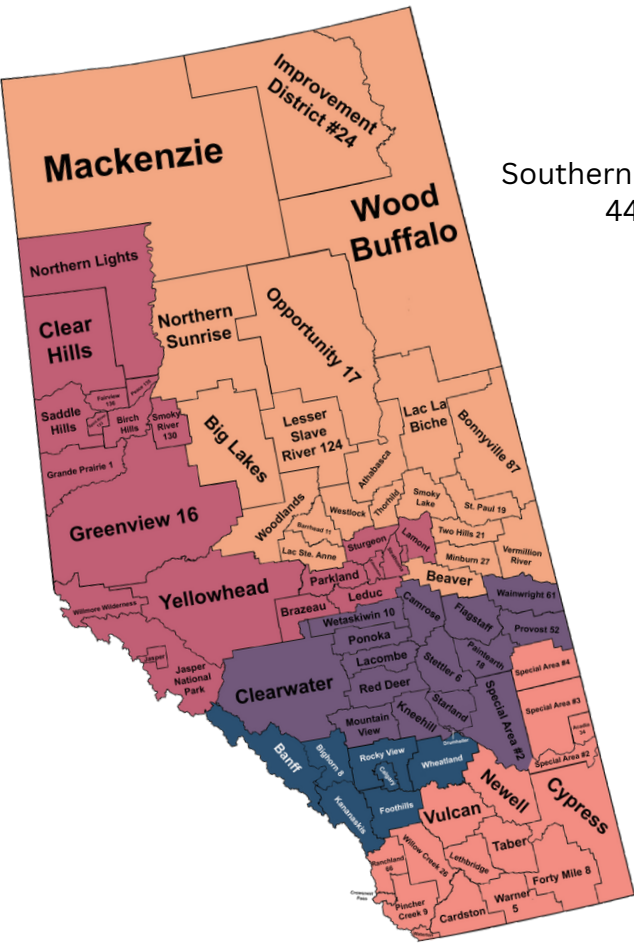
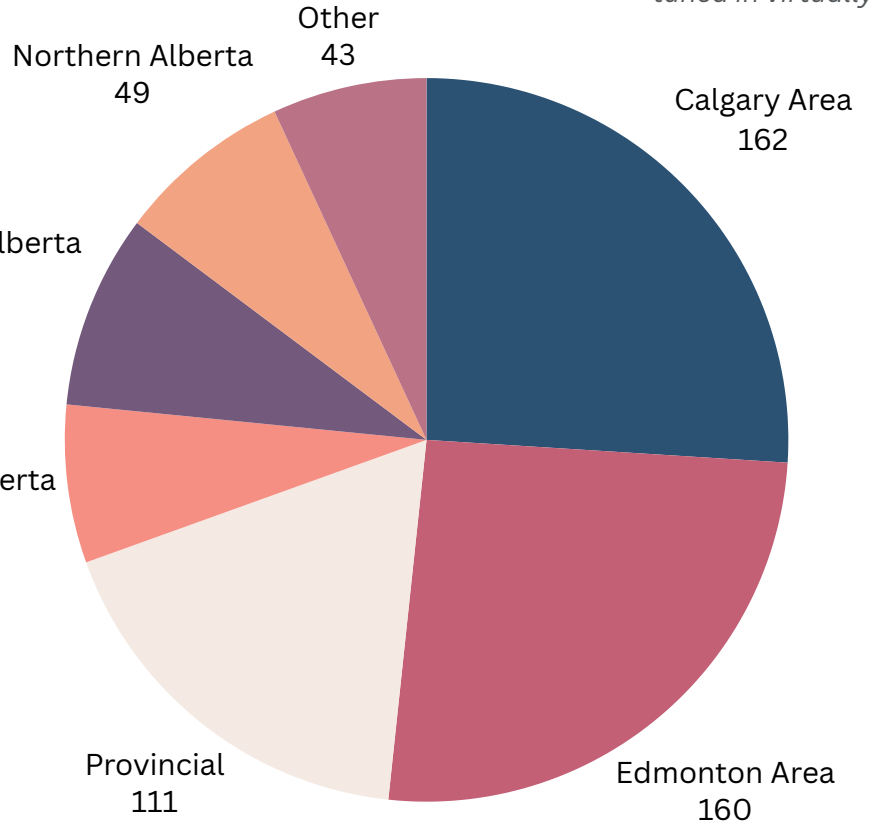
of attendees by organization types:



“Other” includes academics, students, older adults, volunteers, private businesses, etc.

Number of Attendees by Geographical Service Areas:

“Other” includes outside Alberta. 10 of these people tuned in virtually



Virtual Touch Points with Booths/Booth Engagement :



The on-site and virtual exhibits created additional opportunities for attendees to engage with Summit learning. We hosted 16 virtual exhibitors and four additional organizations at the virtual community engagement hub around the theme of "Caregiving." AAG initiated the **Community Engagement Hub** to bring together like-minded organizations to host an engagement area on a specific theme. The caregiving-centric hub was hosted in both the in-person and digital spaces.

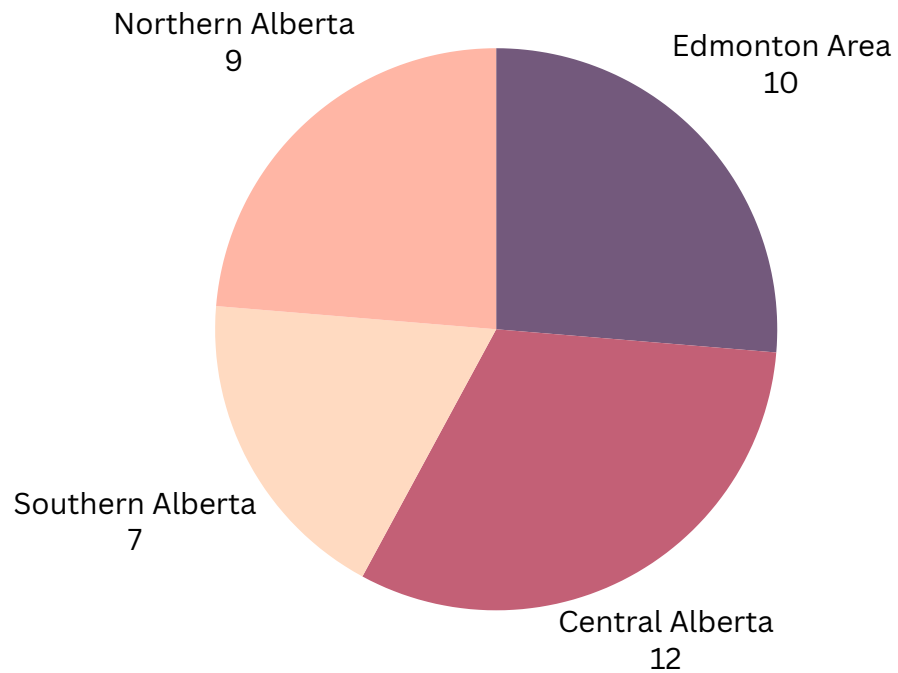
Supporting Remote and Low-Income Communities

HAA and AAG recognized that the impact of the Summit was critically tied to our ability to engage participants from across the province and sector. Many organizations are small and may hail from remote areas, so sending representatives in person to an event like this can be difficult. To provide greater accessibility, a two-pronged approach we proactively offered:

1. Government support and sponsorship were sourced to provide subsidies for smaller organizations' travel, accommodation, and attendance fees.
2. The whole Summit was offered in a hybrid format. Watch parties were facilitated so multiple people from one organization could leverage a single registration to come together and attend.

Through generous support from various donors, we supported **38 individuals** with travel assistance and hotel accommodations.

The Participants were from the following zones:



"I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for the incredible opportunity you have provided by sponsoring my attendance at the Alberta Summit 2023. While I may be writing this on the second day of the conference, I felt it best for me to put pen to paper as I am already overwhelmed with appreciation. As Recreation Therapist and consultant working with seniors in rural Alberta, this experience has been immensely valuable, and I cannot thank you enough for your generous support.

A special thank you to Lauren from Healthy Aging Alberta for her continued support in Southern Alberta. She brings a great energy to supporting seniors and her guidance in enhancing collaboration has already created some very valuable relationships in the Crowsnest Pass. She, like many of your team members, are stewards of change that empower, connect, and support communities desperate for renewal."

~ Subsidy Recipient

Program Highlights

Program

The Summit offered attendees **45 different speakers** (not including the HAA/AAG Team and HAA's Community Leadership Council).

The four keynotes were as follows:

- **Carl Honoré**, Canadian Journalist and Author of *Bolder: How to Age and Feel Better About Aging*. Carl's session discussed ***Developing an Age-Positive Culture and Embracing Aging***. He engaged the audience in shifting perspectives and changing the rhetoric of ageism and how we can reduce stigma while building age-positive communities and culture.
- **Shaun Loney**, Ashoka Fellow (first on the Canadian Prairies) and Ernst and Young's Entrepreneur of the Year, co-founded and mentored the establishment of 12 different social enterprises. He led a session on ***Social Enterprise with the Community-Based Seniors Serving sector*** that discussed innovative and business-savvy non-profits in Canada and how to see the work of non-profits properly valued so society and taxpayers can reap the benefits. He focused on social enterprise and procurement, as limited resources are one of the community's top concerns.
- **Dr. Amara Eniya**, Strategist and Public Policy Expert on city and state policy and international affairs with expertise in Africa, Latin America, and Central Asia and a grassroots organizer on education equity, economic justice, and environmental justice. Dr. Eniya's session discussed ***Collaboration Between Communities, Municipalities, and Government***. She shared insights on effective community organizing and how to actively listen and engage community members to galvanize resources and increase collaboration.
- **Cormac Russell**, Managing Director of *Nurture Development*, Europe's leading ***Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)*** organization. He led a discussion on Asset-Based Community Development, addressing fundamental principles and approaches organizations can use to plan and deliver sustainable programs and services. Following his Keynote, he facilitated an interactive working session to gather input on the next steps to prioritize to continue developing the healthy aging community-based sector titled ***Where do we go From Here? Community Organizing and Sector Development***.



CARL HONORE
Canadian Journalist
Best-selling Author



SHAUN LONEY
Author | Speaker
Social Innovator



DR. AMARA C. ENYIA, JD, PhD
Strategist | Public Policy
Social Impact



CORMAC RUSSELL
Social Explorer | Author
Public Speaker

Program and Session Themes

Speaker topics reflected what the HAA regional community developers have been hearing from communities are a priority over the past three years, in addition to insights from the Community Leadership Council and AAG. Every topic was intentionally chosen to address a trend, highlight a strength, or inspire new perspectives on things that matter to CBSS organizations and allied systems partners. For example, a panel of older adults with diverse backgrounds came together to discuss equity and inclusion, as this was identified as a priority for CBSS organizations across the province during the HAA 2022 Regional Gatherings. Breakout sessions, such as the Rural Response Panel, allowed solutions made in Alberta to be shared and celebrated.

For details on all the Summit presenters and breakout speakers, please visit the [Program](#).

October 10	October 11	October 12
Keynote- Age-positive culture and embracing aging	Keynotes - reframe our thinking regarding social entrepreneurship & community advocacy	Keynote- Asset-Based Community Development
Sessions to Frame the Future –the Demographics Call to Action - Our Attitudes and Beliefs—Appreciating Differences, Anti-Ageism and Promising practices to shape our future.	Promising practices for community-based services and engagement	Promising practices for community-based services and engagement
Learning from Lived Experiences - Mentors	Learning from Lived Experiences- Diversity	Learning from Lived Experiences- 2SLGBTQIA

Sessions Summary

Sessions shared promising practices from across the province and areas of change to co-create the future:

- Access to community services to enhance connection, independence, and well-being
- The integral role of caregivers and caregiver support
- Affordable and accessible assisted transportation
- Older adult mental health in rural and remote communities
- Age-positive justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies; elder abuse
- Opening the door to Aging in Place and housing strategies
- Building Healthy Communities with Dementia, Integrated Care, and Mental Health Supports
- Providing integrated care in rural communities
- Healthy Aging Alberta Showcase - Healthy Aging Framework, Home Supports, Transportation, Social Prescribing, CORE Alberta
- Diversity and experience panels
- Social Prescribing - closed work session
- Alberta Workforce Planning Strategy - closed work session





Attendee Insights

The 2023 Healthy Aging Alberta Summit was a dynamic gathering that gave attendees valuable insights, connections, and inspiration.

“The conference was undoubtedly one of the best I have ever attended and certainly one of the most inspiring and motivational as well. Every topic was rich, every speaker was passionate, and the learning was incredible.”

~ From Summit Participant Appreciation Letter

“Many of us from our Connecting People & Community for Living Well team had the opportunity to attend the summit both in person and on-line, and we were all very impressed with the diversity of presenters and topics, and the organization. We are all still absorbing the incredible amount of content, and all the ideas shared.”

~ Sharon Hamlin, Senior Practice Consultant Strategic Clinical Networks Alberta Health Services

“A conference like the Summit validates the services we provide and re-ignites the passion in many healthcare providers that are likely still recovering from the tribulations of providing services during COVID-19. We are truly stronger together and I have the utmost respect and appreciation for those who worked to provide such an opportunity as this.”

~ Jay Desauony, RecT & Private Consultant, Rural Recreation Therapy

- Participants praised the Summit for creating an engaging environment, with **93% reporting** heightened engagement and **85% experiencing** a broader perspective through open discussions and creative brainstorming.
- The diverse range of viewpoints, appreciated by **96% of participants**, contributed to a vibrant exchange of ideas, and **89% credited** the Summit for inspiring fresh thinking in their respective fields.
- Collaboration was a key theme, with **87% expressing** satisfaction with opportunities for partnership and **92% recognizing** the Summit as a valuable networking platform. Examples, like the Social Prescribing session, showcased the Summit's impact in fostering collaborations beyond the event.
- The Summit garnered attention for amplifying sector visibility, with **94% acknowledging** its potential contributions and providing an **average rating of 4.5 out of 5 for Cross-pollinating ideas** for innovation and systems change/design.
- Attendees left the Summit feeling empowered, with **85% reporting** increased knowledge or skills.



The Summit served as a catalyst for meaningful insights, collaboration, and inspiration around community-focused approaches to healthy aging.

Key areas of interest include:

- New funding models
- Asset-Based Community Development
- Appetite for more networking and connections across the province
- Cross-sector collaboration and systems integration
- The CBSS sector is recognized as a coordinated system with a critical role in the broader continuum of care



Partner Insights

Government Support

Her Worship Jyoti Gondek, Mayor of Calgary, opened the first day with Corinne Schalm, Assistant Deputy Minister of Continuing Care in Alberta Health. Both shared messages to support the older adult serving sector.

Honourable Minister of Seniors, Community, and Social Services Jason Nixon attended in person and expressed his continued support for the work of HAA and the importance of a coordinated CBSS sector as a critical pillar to ensuring older adults have what they need to continue to age well in their communities of choice.

Through a virtual message, Honorable Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Health, also expressed her support for an integrated approach between community and health to ensure the well-being of older adults.



Alberta Association on Gerontology (AAG)

AAG appreciated the opportunity to further amplify their thought leadership initiative by participating in this Summit. This experience demonstrates the power and potential of role-modelling the collaboration needed to transform community and continuing care.

The Summit achieved a greater diversity of inspiring speakers for thought leadership than would have been possible in an AAG-only initiative; similarly, the reach of the Summit was an exceptional bonus added by HAA's hybrid environment. Attendee insights speak to the intended outcomes of a thought-leadership initiative.

AAG will build on the Summit experience and content from the Diversity Panel to implement a second-thought leadership initiative, healthy aging with a future of diversity, in March 2024.

Healthy Aging Alberta (HAA)

HAA's work is strongly aligned with the themes of asset-based community development, diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies for older adults, as well as innovative service delivery or design practices. This is a critical time for Alberta to lean into cross-sectoral collaborative action, as different systems partners recognize the importance of community-focused care and approaches to aging well. This insight will be one of the critical drivers for our upcoming work as we build out additional connection and collaboration opportunities with our annual Regional Gatherings, Healthy Aging CORE Alberta resource sharing and groups, Communities of Practice on key issues, and interconnection at a national level.

Healthy Aging Alberta has received outstanding, positive feedback about the Summit experience from attendees, including multiple letters of appreciation describing the event as one of the best learning and networking opportunities focused on older adults they have attended. Participants reported that the content was fresh, different, and engaging. They mentioned that instead of sessions only reporting on existing initiatives, the content heavily focused on collaborative design and systems change for building the Alberta of tomorrow. The HAA team is building on this work through ongoing opportunities for sector collaboration throughout the year and further development on systems change conversations discussed at the Summit.



What's Next?

Continued cross-sectoral conversations will build on content and learnings from the Summit, supporting the engagement of stakeholders in Alberta communities and across sectors and developing the changes we need to see. To name a few 2024 initiatives:

- CORE Alberta information session on February 13, 2024, delved deeply into AAG & HAA learning related to person-centred, community-focused collaboration
- On February 14, 2024, HAA provided an online learning session related to social prescribing from a study trip to the United Kingdom. This is in addition to the ongoing community of practice related to social prescribing on CORE Alberta.
- A Community Forum, March 6, 2024, sponsored by AAG, on thought leadership for healthy aging in a future of diversity.
- Focused AAG's Stakeholder Collaborative Committee discussions from February to April 2024 on shared learning and implementation of person-centred, community-focused development for well-being. This work links directly to questions about Alberta's new health system plans, namely, "What is local?"



The Summit provided important information for HAA to update its strategic plan for 2024-2028.

Several initiatives and areas of work are emerging as a result, including:

- Enhance Healthy Aging CORE Alberta user experience, sector digital collaboration, and increased connections with Regional Community Developers.
- Support the development of a National CBSS sector, including planning for the inaugural National CBSS Summit in June 2024 in Ottawa.
- Enhance the CBSS Sector systems map to showcase sector players and their connection points better.
- Finalize the digital Healthy Aging Framework tool to support the development, capacity, and growth of CBSS organizations.
- Ongoing sector asset mapping activities alongside Alberta communities.
- Continue Alberta CBSS sector workforce planning efforts started in February 2024 with the Government of Alberta, building on the space created at the Summit to learn from other sectors and reflect on the path forward.
- Pursue Federal investment in asset-based community development in communities across Alberta, informed by the work at the Summit (already submitted).

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HAA Regional Gatherings

HAA will host Regional Gatherings through April-June 2024, both in-person and virtually, for CBSS organizations across the province to connect, collaborate, learn, and discuss issues. The virtual success of our Summit has inspired the incorporation of some of the virtual engagement learnings into our Regional Gatherings. Stay tuned for more information on these opportunities.

Announcement for Next Summit

We anticipate the second *Healthy Aging- Alberta Summit* in the fall of 2025.