



NewsLink

Toronto Seniors Council - An independent voice

Volume One, Issue One

Fall 2008

A Message from the Chair

The TSC Board of Directors and members would like to extend sincere appreciation to the Board of Directors of Downsview Services to Seniors for so generously supporting us with office space. We would also like to thank Joanne Jasper, Executive Director, who first suggested our partnership, and all the staff and clients at Downsview for making us feel so welcome.

The Toronto Seniors Council provides opportunities for seniors in Toronto to voice their concerns and to actively engage in strategies to improve the quality of life for themselves and their communities

The Board of Director's Strategic Plan for 2008 and 2009 is focused on addressing and working on the four issues that are of most concern to our members: Combating Ageism; Accessibility; Affordable Housing; Elder Abuse.

Through our committees and programs we provide workshops and seminars to enable seniors to become active in their area of interest and to speak on their own behalf. We are collaborating with other senior organizations to look at and work on mutual concerns.

Newslink will regularly highlight the work of TSC committees and programs. Become a TSC member and help us to improve the quality of life for seniors in Toronto.

Moira Bacon

Friendly to Seniors

Karin Ehrentraut

Friendly to Seniors is a unique program, developed and delivered by seniors at the Toronto Seniors Council, designed to make businesses and service organizations more readily accessible to seniors.

Friendly to Seniors identifies barriers that limit seniors' access to businesses and educates employees on how to better serve the growing consumer group.

By raising awareness of attitudes and identifying physical barriers, Friendly to Seniors provides practical suggestions on ways to reduce such barriers. The result is improved accessibility for everyone, regardless of age and ability.

For more information about the Friendly to Seniors Program please go to torontoseniorscouncil.ca/whatis.

We've Moved!

We've moved from downtown to uptown! Thanks to the generous support of Downsview Services to Seniors, we have been warmly welcomed at our new location:

497 Wilson Avenue
Toronto, ON M3H 1V1

Just east of the Wilson
Subway Station

Our new phone number is:

416-630-7000

Please come and visit us at our
new office

■ ■ ■

Thank You

**Alterna Savings for
generously supporting
the printing of this
newsletter**



“Did you Know?”

Karin Ehrentraut

You may have struggled with doors that are difficult to open, reading restaurant menus, finding an office suite, and wished there was a place to sit when faced with a lineup at the bank. For some seniors, asking for help can be difficult. Depending on how that person addresses a problem, he or she can be seen as negative or complaining.

“Did you Know?”, funded by New Horizons for Seniors, is a new project that takes the Friendly to Seniors concept of making our communities more accessible and safer for seniors to a grass roots level. Seniors will have a means to impact their community in a positive way, to live with dignity and respect.

Through a one-hour presentation, “Did You Know?” will teach seniors how to identify basic obstacles for independence and how to suggest simple solutions to improve accessibility. While

making businesses aware of simple physical improvements, seniors will focus on positive attitudes toward aging. Our goal is to engage seniors directly to become proactive, giving them the confidence to speak up and make a difference.

As seniors engage their community raising awareness with this informative approach; going about their business, whether it’s banking, dining out, seeing a movie, going to the doctor or shopping, will be easier. A more accessible, safer community will reduce social isolation for all seniors. An accessible, safer community is good for everyone.

To volunteer as a presenter or to arrange a “Did You Know?” presentation at your senior organization, please call 416-630-7000 or email tsc@pathcom.com.

Financial Planning: It’s Never Too Late

These are challenging times financially, especially if you are retired or are getting ready to retire. The reality is that we all have to recognize current economic developments and take steps to ensure that our financial well-being and that of our loved ones is taken care of. It is never too late to plan for your future and, in times like these, it’s a good idea to review any financial planning you have already done.

The following diagram brings this point home.

$$2 \times 3 \times 5 \times 365 \times 20 = \$219,000$$

Here’s what it relates to: if you take a husband and wife (aged 60) who eat three meals a day for 365 days per year over 20 years (life expectancy), at an average of \$5.00 per meal; the cost for the two of them just to eat in retirement will be more than \$200,000. That figure excludes inflation, which most certainly will be driven upwards by recent increases in the cost of energy and food.

So, what should you do if the reality of this figure hits home? If you have not already done so, now is a good time to sit down and calculate what your current expenses are and what your income is or will be in retirement. If your long-term figures show that the money will run out, you need to do one of two things: cut expenses or increase income.

The next big question to consider is how to maximize your income to offset any changes in the economy. If you have been dealing with a financial services professional, set up an appointment to revisit previous plans. If you have not already taken this step, it is a good idea to sit down with a financial planner and have him or her take you through a planning process that can help you find better ways to ensure your peace of mind.

Alterna Savings
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This issue of NewsLink was produced by Karin Ehrentraut, Sheila Kieran and Elizabeth Walker

A Friendly to Seniors Hospital - A Cure for Ageism in Eldercare

Beverley McClelland



North York General Hospital and Friendly to Seniors are collaborating on an innovative initiative to combat ageism, a negative perception of old age.

Toronto Seniors Council

Friendly to Seniors program fosters greater knowledge, understanding, support and respect for our aging population. Friendly to Seniors provides an assessment of safety and accessibility, physical environments and offers practical and often low cost suggestions for improvements to meet senior's needs.

The multiple complexities of acute and chronic illness of seniors present new challenges in geriatric care. Ageism often plays a role, sometimes fatal, in patient outcomes. Busy staff may ignore such losses as hearing, vision and mobility that are often associated with aging. This may result in poor or non-existent communication. Hospitals who have policies and procedures that reflect a culture, attitude and environment that values older adults need staff members who are respectful and aware of elder care concerns.

Seniors account for one-third of all hospital admissions and two-thirds of hospital stays, which are two times longer than non-seniors. By 2025, one in four people in the population will be over the age of sixty-five.

Recognizing that seniors have different health concerns and issues, North York General Hospital joined with the Toronto Seniors Council in the Friendly to Seniors initiative - one of the first hospitals to do so. The hospital had identified Care of the Elderly/Elder Care as a clinical priority in 2004 and an Elder Care staff position was created: its purpose was to ensure patient care improvements through staff education and development of community partnerships.

Friendly to Seniors Assessments were conducted by Toronto Seniors Council volunteers. In 2006, after being trained, North York General Hospital staff and senior volunteers started facilitating Friendly to Seniors Workshops in house. **To date, more than 500 hospital staff have participated in Friendly to Seniors workshops.**

Hospital staff are enthusiastic about the program and the benefits to them – and those who need their care. Partnerships can create an improved quality of life for many – **“if it’s good for seniors, it’s good for all.”**

Accessibility Committee

Lilian Wells

The Accessibility Committee, which welcomes new members, has been very active over the past year.

We have submitted feedback on the draft standards for the new Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. (AODA). The Customer Service Standards did incorporate some of our recommendations. Transportation Standards are still being developed after an initially negative response, by us and others, on the content and lack of involvement of people with disabilities in creating the first draft. Standards relating to the Built Environment (this includes buildings, parks, sidewalks, etc.) and to employment are also under development and we will be responding to drafts in the future.

We were concerned that the special services, provided by Pearson Airport were not adequately publicized so that many travelers, especially seniors, do not know about them. We wrote to the management, but are not convinced that the needed changes have been made. Therefore, this issue remains on our agenda.

We made a deputation to the Toronto Transit Commission regarding accessibility issues and information. For example, did you know that a yellow “S” on a subway door indicates there is priority seating for seniors just inside? We said that was inadequate: seniors can’t battle against the stream of riders to reach this seating. Improvements are underway and you may notice announcements asking people to give up their seats for seniors and others who need them.

We are currently starting to meet with some architects to plan ways to increase the profession’s interest and knowledge of issues that are important for seniors.

Toronto Seniors Council
497 Wilson Avenue
Toronto, ON M3H 1V1
416-630-7000

Just east of the
Wilson Subway Station

e-mail: tsc@pathcom.com

Web: torontoseniorscouncil.ca

Our office is open Tuesday, Wednesday and
Thursday 9:00 am until 3:30 pm

Join the Toronto Seniors Council

We are a group of active, involved older adults. We are open to new members and new ideas that will make Toronto a senior friendly city.

- Call or write us for more information.
- Report a concern about a seniors' issue to this newsletter. Send in your own story or write a letter regarding an issue you feel strongly about.
- Join one of our committees: Friendly to Seniors, Accessibility, Housing or Symposium Planning.
- Let us know about seniors' events in your community.
- As a Toronto Seniors Council member you have a platform for action on seniors' issues in Toronto.

Toronto Seniors Council Board of Directors

President	Moira Bacon
Secretary	Beverley McClelland
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Executive Coordinator	Karin Ehrentraut

Membership Form - Please print

Voting Member \$25.00

Associate/Non-voting Member \$25.00 *

* Any person with an interest in the work of the Toronto Seniors Council

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____

E-mail: _____ Fax: _____

Please make cheque payable to:
Toronto Seniors Council, 497 Wilson Avenue, Toronto, ON M3H 1V1