

C0071



# iGenNB: Intergenerational Living for Community Wellbeing

*Last updated: July 2023*

## Summary

- New Brunswick needs more affordable housing for older and younger adults. An intergenerational living model could address these challenges.
- While many older adults want to age in place, it is often difficult due to expense and declining health. Living alone as one ages can lead to social isolation and other negative impacts. These issues can eventually strain health and social services.
- This project aimed to start, promote, and build an intergenerational living model that combines (1) **home sharing** and (2) **community-based social activities** in Fredericton. Community based social activities included:
  - (2a) **Community Conversations to Connect Generations:** Participants took part in conversations to envision intergenerational programs/activities together through community consultation. One connection program, 'Culinary Connections,' came out of this consultation.
  - (2b) **Culinary Connections:** Participants learned new recipes and cooking techniques.
- Participant details:
  - Home sharing: 23 applicants - 8 older adults, 15 younger adults (which included many international students). 1 match established.
  - Community-based social activities:
    - Community Conversation to Connection Generations = 28 (18 older adults, 10 younger adults).
    - Culinary Connections with iGenNB = 24 (exact number of older adults vs. younger adults not provided).

## HSPP Focus Area

Improving social and built environments to foster healthy aging

## Project Start & End Date

January 1, 2020 – March 31, 2022

## Organization/Agency

The Ville Cooperative Ltd.

## Location

Fredericton, New Brunswick

## Principle Investigator(s)

[Genevieve MacRae](#), [Dr. Andrea Trenholm](#) and [Aimée Foreman](#)

Indicator	Impact / Outcome / Result	Quote
Social Isolation	<p><b>Home sharing:</b></p> <p>Out of 23 interested individuals, only one home sharing match was made. This match dissolved after one month. Even though the match was not successful, some valuable data came out of the lessons learned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Struggles arose between the match with schedules, duties, and power dynamics within the relationship.</li> <li>• Home sharing can contribute to aging in place by improving the objective and subjective quality of life of older adults, as well as their self-reported health and wellbeing. These improvements are likely mediated by the increase in social connection and friendship, as well as help with household tasks. But due to limitations of the current project, improvements cannot be concluded from this data.</li> </ul>	<p>Due to the low sample size, quotes were not used to ensure confidentiality of participants.</p>

### **Intergenerational activities:**

Many older and younger adults seldom have an opportunity to connect with individuals of other generations. Post-attendee survey data about both intergenerational activities was positive:

- 81% of respondents from Community Conversation to Connection Generations would like to lead or participate in a future iGenNB program or activity.
- Two participants (one older and one younger) reported enjoying the Culinary Connections program and stated that they had learned a lot. Both were interested in taking additional intergenerational programs. After both activities ended, enquiries were made about similar future activities.

### **Methods and Comparison**

Data was collected from the matched home sharing participants by interviews. A health survey was also collected from the older adult. Due to the low sample size of the home sharing matches, overarching conclusions could not be reached. Additional data was used from young adults awaiting a match, project team interviews, steering committee feedback, and intergenerational social activities/programs participants to inform lessons learned from this project.

### **Conclusions and Lessons Learned**

It was not anticipated that the uptake of home sharing was going to require such a large social change. Home sharing matches require:

- More emphasis on expectation management and relationship engagement between matches.
- Greater support from a social worker through the participant journey.

Through the intergenerational activities it was identified that people in the community are interested in intergenerational connections and seeing avenues to build intergenerational relationships.

### **Recommendations**

- Recruit older adults (who like having company, but who are starting to have difficulty with some household tasks) and young adults (international students).
- Create home sharing agreements that directly state the financial exchange and expectations.
- Preparing and ongoing support for matched participants for home sharing.
- Have older adults contribute to the services that they need and request. Providing the opportunity to do so gives older adults purpose and meaning. It also leads to better decisions and design.

### **Next Steps**

The project focused on alignment with [Canada Home Share](#). As of the final report, the project submitted a formal request to have Canada Home Share select Fredericton, New Brunswick, as one of their ten national sites for program development. Post-program completion, one of the project leads announced in a [LinkedIn post](#) that Canada Home Share will be coming to New Brunswick. Further information from the project team confirmed that coordination with Canada Home Share continues, however timing has been impacted by the program being relocated to [HelpAge Canada](#). New terms of reference are being finalized before Canada Home Share proceeds with site expansion to Fredericton.

The project has also assessed geographic expansion to Sackville, New Brunswick. Founder and coordinator of Community Connect, Hannah Crouse, and advisor Dr. Michael Fox of Mount Allison University, have approached the Project Team to explore the introduction of home sharing in Sackville.

## Disclaimer

The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

*Financial contribution from*



Public Health      Agence de la santé  
Agency of Canada      publique du Canada