

Tools & Resources

Webinar: An age-friendly and Indigenous-inclusive approach to emergency preparedness

January 14, 2025

BC Healthy Communities

- Age-friendly 2026 Grants Application Guide: https://bchealthycommunities.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Age-friendlyCommunities_ApplicationGuide_2026.pdf
- BC Healthy Communities Age-friendly Communities Action Guide https://bchealthycommunities.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Age-Friendly_Action_Guide_V1.0_Web.pdf
- Applying an Equity Lens in Age-friendly Communities Planning <https://bchealthycommunities.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Age-friendly-Planning-Equity-Lens-1.pdf>
- Previous AFC Webinar- From Policy to Practice: Making Transportation Work for Older Adults <https://bchealthycommunities.ca/index.php/2025/06/04/afc-webinar-from-policy-to-practice-making-transportation-work-for-older-adults/>
- Previous AFC Webinar – Connecting Communities Across Generations: The Power of an Intergenerational Approach <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLhOMXTFI4Y&t=3091s>
- Previous AFC Webinar – How to enhance older adult participation in community programs https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrPCBp_52Wl
- PlanH Healthy Community Engagement Action Guide <https://bchealthycommunities.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/healthy-community-engagement.pdf>



Strengthening Community Resilience

An Age-Friendly and Indigenous-Inclusive Approach to Emergency Preparedness

This handout is focused on re-centering emergency preparedness around people. It highlights why inclusive, accessible, and careful planning matters, especially for Elders, older adults, people with disabilities, and others whose needs are often overlooked in traditional emergency systems.

Why Age-Friendly Preparedness Matters

- Many older adults manage health, mobility, and medical needs that become much harder during emergencies. Planning must account for power-dependent equipment, medications, mobility supports, and the need for extra time and assistance.
- Delayed or confusing information can increase fear, anxiety, and risk.
- In Indigenous communities, Elders play vital cultural and community roles. Evacuation can have emotional impacts when it separates Elders from land, home, and community connections.
- Past experience, including forced relocation and residential schools, may affect how some Elders respond to evacuation orders. Emotional safety and trust matter.
- Including Elders in planning strengthens preparedness. Their knowledge, guidance, and lived experience help create safer and more effective emergency plans.

Communication for All Ages and Cultures

- Effective communication means people receive the message, understand it, and feel confident acting on it.
- Not everyone accesses information through phones, apps, or the internet. Relying on technology leaves many older adults and Elders out.
- Trusted sources matter. Many Elders rely on community leaders, local radio, in-person updates, television, or landline phones.
- Plain, simple language is essential during emergencies. Clear direction reduces confusion and anxiety.

- Cultural and language preferences influence how messages are understood and trusted.

Integrating Traditional Knowledge

- Elders share insight into seasonal patterns, land behavior, and local risks that strengthen emergency planning.
- Traditional teachings support community care, connection, and resilience during stressful times.
- Knowledge must be gathered and used with permission, respect, and attention to community protocols.

Evacuation and Transportation Supports

Step	What This Means
Plan	Identify mobility, health, and caregiving needs in advance. Know who may need extra time, medical support, or assistance to evacuate safely.
Create	Create transportation options that work for different needs, including support for mobility aids, caregivers, and people who do not drive.
Ensure	Ensure reception centres support emotional and cultural safety, especially for Elders, and allow families and community members to stay connected.

Strengthening Community Networks

- Build everyday support systems that check in on Elders and older adults before emergencies happen.
- Use existing relationship and routines of care as part of preparedness, not just formal emergency plans.
- Work with caregivers, health workers, volunteers, and cultural leaders who already know community needs.
- Create buddy systems or wellness check teams that reflect how communities already support one another.
- Use community centres as trusted gathering spaces for connection, information, and support during emergencies.
- Strong community networks reduce isolation, increase safety, and help communities respond together when systems are stretched.

Tools and Resources

Age-Friendly Checklists	Helps communities identify strengths and gaps in preparedness for Elders and older adults (communication, evacuation, reception centres).
Mobility and Health Needs Registries	Identifies who may need extra support during evacuations, heat events, or smoke events (transportation, medical equipment, mobility assistance).
Communication Templates	Provides clear, pre-written messages for alerts and updates across radio, print, social media, and in-person communication.
Cultural Safety Guides	Supports respectful evacuation and reception practices, including keeping families together and creating culturally safe spaces.
Community-Scaled Tools	Allows tools to be adapted for small or large communities (formal systems or simple paper lists).

Resources from the Resort Municipality of Whistler

- Whistler Community Service Society Senior Resources Guide: ([WCSS-SeniorsResourceGuide_Digital-July2024.pdf](#))
- Whistler Mature Action Community (MAC) [Home - Whistler Mature Action Community](#)
- Whistler Age-friendly Assessment and Action Plan [Microsoft Word - 7083_2021-11_Final_Report_2.docx](#)
- [Whistler Wildfire Strategy and Community Resiliency Program | Resort Municipality of Whistler](#)
- [News | RMOW encourages community and visitors to prepare for wildfires | Resort Municipality of Whistler](#)
- [During an Emergency and Recovery After an Emergency | Resort Municipality of Whistler](#)
- [Emergency Preparation and Hazards | Resort Municipality of Whistler](#)
- [Emergency Preparedness for Older Adults in Whistler Report](#)

