

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within Continuing Care Organizations

Benin Al-Manaihil
Catamount Fellowship • April, 2022

Community partner: Brenda Strafford Foundation – Iqbal Ali & Amadea Schweighofer

Faculty mentor: Ines Sametband (Psychology)

Research Question: How might we improve and foster a diverse, inclusive, and safe community within continuing care organizations that is built on equality for all?

Background

Within the context of continuing care settings across Canada, there is a growing need for inclusive care that recognizes and supports the diversity that exists among the older adult population and care providers. This report will be focused on enhancing DEI from both a resident and staff perspective, while taking into account the generational diversity and sensitivity of these populations. The purpose of this report is to: 1) help long-term care homes understand and better meet the needs of the diverse individuals that live, work, and visit in long-term care home; 2) to explore the issues and barriers that hinder DEI within continuing care organizations; and 3) to develop emerging initiatives to enhance DEI. More specifically, this report aims to answer the following research question: “how might we improve and foster a diverse, inclusive, and safe community within long-term care organizations that is built on equality for all?”

What is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?

Diversity includes the variety of unique characteristics, dimensions, and qualities that we all possess. Race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, physical abilities, and lived experiences, can all make up individual diversity (Canadian Centre for Diversity & Inclusion (CCDI), 2022).

Equity refers to everyone being treated according to their diverse needs in a way that enables everyone to participate, perform, and engage to the same extent (CCDI, 2022).

Inclusion is all about creating a culture that embraces, accepts, and respects diversity. It should be an equitable effort to meet diverse needs of individuals so that they feel valued, respected, and able to contribute their best effort to reach their full potential (CCDI, 2022).

Canada’s Long-Term Care/Continuing Care Landscape

As of 2021, there are a total of 2,076 long-term care homes across Canada (CIHI, 2021). In Canada, the aging population of seniors aged 65 and older represents 19% (over 7 million) of the total population and is projected to account for over one-fifth of the Canadian population by 2025 (Statistics Canada, 2021). Across Canada, 415, 530 seniors aged 65 and older live in 5, 801 long-term care (LTC) homes, representing 7% of Canada’s older adult population (Flanagan et al., 2021).

Long-Term Care: “Facilities [that] provide living accommodation for people who require on-site delivery of 24 hour, 7 days a week supervised care, including professional health services and personal care” (Health Canada, 2004).

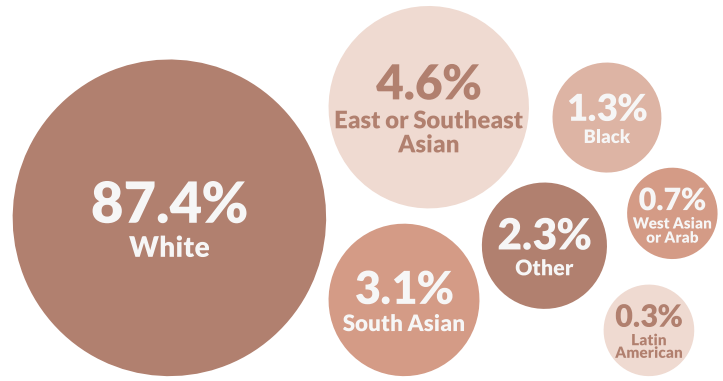
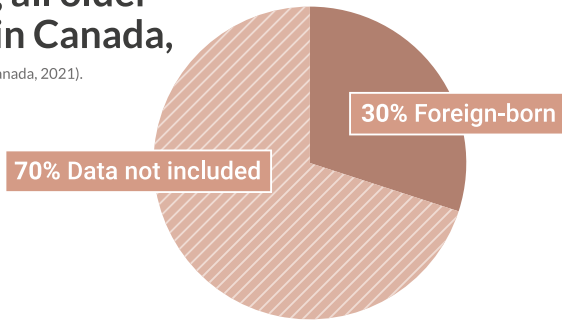
Continuing Care: “A range of services that support the health and well-being of individuals living in their own home, a supportive living, or long-term care setting” (Alberta Health Services, n.d.).

Statistics

The aging population is not only growing, but it is also becoming more diverse.

Among all older adults in Canada,

(Government of Canada, 2021).

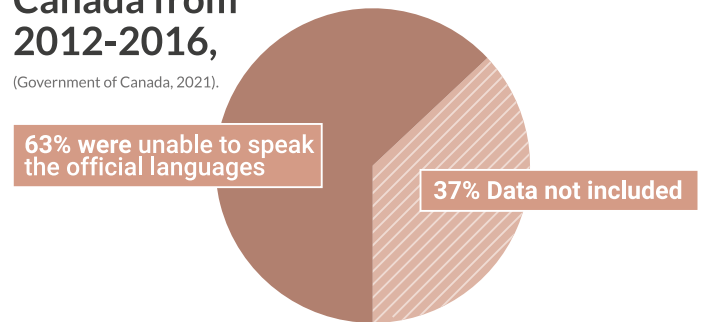


16 000 - 81 000
LGBTQ2S+ older adults in Alberta

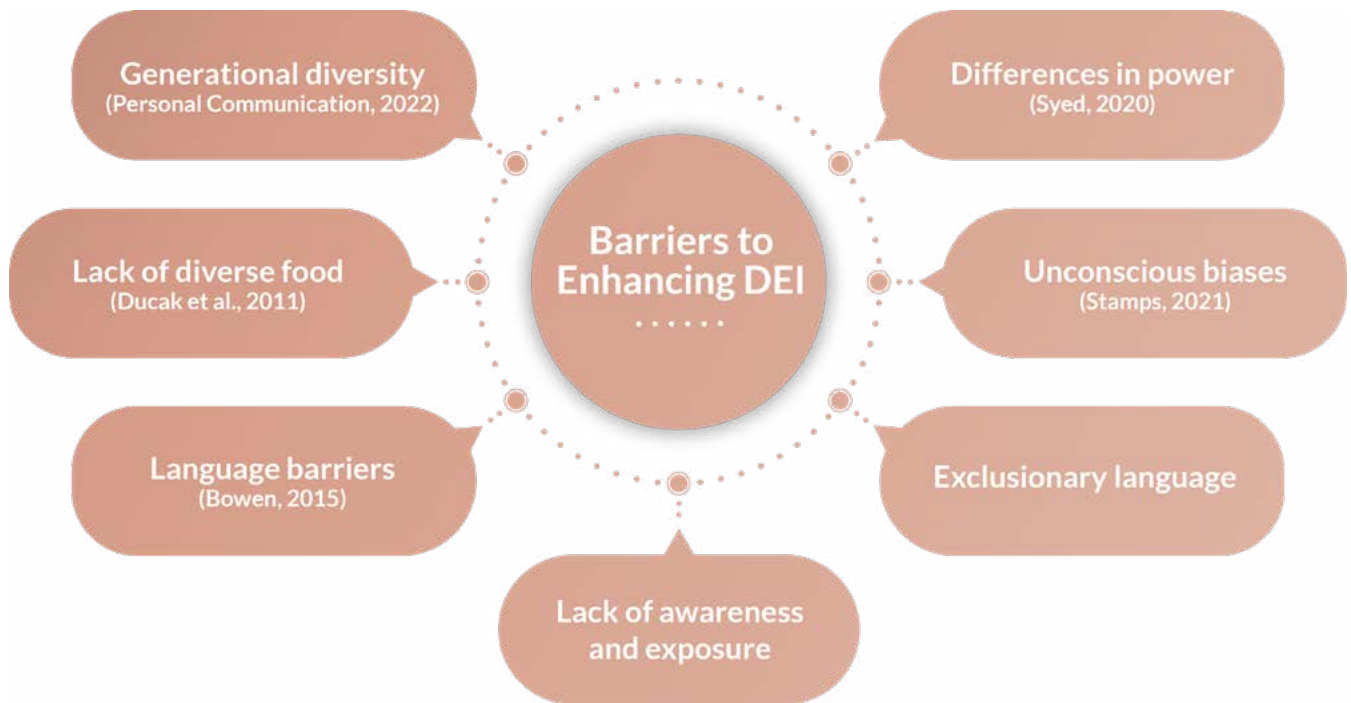
(Government of Alberta, 2020).

Of the immigrant seniors who arrived in Canada from 2012-2016,

(Government of Canada, 2021).



Barriers to Enhancing DEI:

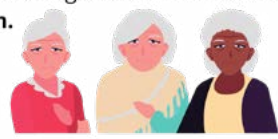


Impacts of Lack of DEI

- Negative impacts on job performance, satisfaction, well-being, and stress (Aysola et al., 2018).
- Racialized and LGBTQ+ individuals are more likely to experience poorer health and mental health outcomes, health disparities, and poor decision-making within healthcare organizations (Stamps, 2021).
- Racialized, immigrant care workers experience racist verbal attacks and insults, sexist verbal attacks, rejection, hindering care, harassment, insinuating incompetence, and accusations (Ulusoy and Schablon, 2020).
- LGBTQ+ older adults are fearful of the misunderstanding, stigma, and discrimination they are likely to experience from care workers and residents in continuing care homes (Mozes, 2021), which leads to social isolation and remaining silent about their sexual orientations.
- Ethnically and linguistically diverse older adults are more likely to experience unequal health outcomes, unequal treatment, loneliness, fewer social interactions, and a lack of sense of community due to language barriers (Bowen, 2015).
- Weight loss and poor food intake as a result of unmet cultural food and dining preferences (Syed, 2021)



Intended to encourage residents, care workers, and visitors to engage in personal reflection and become exposed to diverse backgrounds through awareness strategies and minimal direct interaction.



Focused on approaches that target organizational change through exerting greater effort and direct action.



Recommendations

- **Micro Initiatives: Exposure & Awareness**
 - Intended to encourage residents, care workers, and visitors to engage in personal reflection and become exposed to diverse backgrounds through awareness strategies and minimal direct interaction
 - Awareness posters
 - Immersion, celebration, and recreational activities
- **Macro Initiatives: Organizational Change**
 - Focused on approaches that target organizational change through exerting greater effort and direct action
 - Policy revision
 - Ongoing training, workshops, and learning opportunities for both staff and residents

Reference

- Alberta Health Services. (n.d.). Continuing Care Glossary. <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/cc/Page15500.aspx>
- Aysola, J., Barg, F. K., Martinez, A. B., et al. (2018). Perceptions of factors associated with inclusive work and learning environments in health care organizations. *JAMA Network Open*, 1(4), e181003. [10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2018.1003](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2018.1003)
- Bowen, S. (2015). The impact of language barriers on patient safety and quality of care. *Société Santé en Français*. <https://www.reseausantene.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Impact-language-barrier-qualitysafety.pdf>
- Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2021, December). COVID-19's impact on long-term care. <https://www.cihi.ca/en/covid-19-resources/impact-of-covid-19-on-canadas-health-care-systems/long-term-care>
- Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (2022). Glossary of terms: A reference tool. <https://ccdi.ca/media/3150/ccdi-glossary-of-terms-eng.pdf>
- Ducak, K., et al. (2011). Menu planning in long-term care: Toward resident-centered menus. *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*, 72(2): 8–83. <http://libproxy.mtroyal.ca/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/menu-planning-long-term-care-toward-resident/docview/868918373/se-2?accountid=1343>
- Flanagan, A., Um, S., Sinha, S., et al. (2021). Leading no one behind in long-term care: Enhancing socio-demographic data collection in long-term care settings. *National Institute on Aging and Wellesley Institute*. <https://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/LeavingNoOneBehind-July-20-2021-FINAL.pdf>
- Government of Canada. (2021, May 26). Social isolation of seniors: A focus on new immigrant and refugee seniors in Canada. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/seniors/forum/social-isolation-immigrant-refugee.html>
- Government of Canada. (2018). Social isolation of seniors: A focus on LGBTQ seniors in Canada. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/canada/employment-social-development/corporate/seniors/forum/social-isolation-lgbtq-social-isolation-lgbtq-seniors-EN.pdf>
- Government of Alberta. (2020). Aging with pride: A guide to creating inclusive services for LGBTQ2S+ older adults. Ministry of Seniors and Housing. <https://eapon.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/aging-with-pride-guide-2020.pdf>
- Health Canada. (2004). Long-term facilities-based care. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/home-continuing-care/long-term-facilities-based-care.html>
- Mozes, A. (2021, August 10). A second 'closet' for some LGBTQ seniors entering nursing homes. *U.S. News* <https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2021-08-10/a-second-closet-for-some-lgbtq-seniors-entering-nursing-homes>
- Stamps, D. C. (2021). Nursing leadership must confront implicit bias as a barrier to diversity in health care today. *Nurse Leader*, 19(6), 630–638. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mnl.2021.02.004>
- Statistics Canada. (2021). By the numbers: National seniors' day, 2021. https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/dai/smr08/2021/smr08_254
- Public Health Agency of Canada. 2020. Aging and chronic diseases: A profile of Canadian seniors. Government of Canada. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/aging-chronic-diseases-profile-canadian-seniors-report.html>
- Syed, I. U. (2020). Racism, racialization, and health equity in Canadian residential long-term care: A case study in Toronto. *Social Science and Medicine*, 265, 11352. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.113524>
- Ulusoy, N., & Schablon, A. (2020). Discrimination in in-patient geriatric care: A qualitative study on the experiences of employees with a Turkish migration background. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(7), 2205. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17072205>