

Building Capacity to Deliver Physical Activity Programs, Services and Environments for Women 55–70

When delivering physical activity or sport initiatives for women 55-70 it is important that organizations have the capacity to adapt, modify or develop programs, services and environments that respond to the needs and concerns of women 55-70. Knowledgeable and informed staff will develop initiatives that are safe, beneficial and appropriate.

Assess Your Organizational Capacity

Use the *Building Your Case: Physical Activity and Women 55–70* fact sheet to determine what you want to do, your rationale for doing it and whether it fits with your organizational mandate. Once you have established the fit, assess your current capacity to implement your proposed initiatives. If you need to build capacity in any area, here are some ideas that can help you.

Education

A number of groups can help provide the education needed to build capacity in issues such as chronic disease, cultural issues, social problems, gerontology, physical activity and sport.

- **Universities, colleges and high schools** – offer both full-credit (curriculum-based) and short-term (weekend/evening) courses. These groups will also develop education sessions (usually for a small fee) specifically for groups.
- **Organizations and associations** – health-related organizations can educate about certain chronic conditions, including activities to encourage for maximum results. Cultural associations can educate about customs, sensitivities and modifications that can maximize participation. Social service organizations can provide information on social issues and how to structure subsidies, transportation support and outreach services to best meet the needs of vulnerable groups.
- **Conferences and seminars** – local opportunities are often found in newspapers or on-line in community bulletins. Provincial/territorial/federal government departments and organizations often host annual events so check their websites regularly or ask to be added to their mailing lists so you don't miss any opportunities.
- **Partners** – groups in your community or across the country may have already built capacity in this area. Connect with them to learn about what worked, what did not and the kind of training/education opportunities they provided.

Training

- **Health professionals** – physiotherapists, chiropractors, doctors, nurses and others have specialized training in numerous health issues. Request their assistance to train staff about conditions, surgeries (pre and post options) safe modifications/adaptations, etc. Developing this relationship can also increase referrals to your programs and services.
- **Formal physical activity training programs** specifically targeted to older adults are offered through local, provincial, national and international organizations. Plan to contact them to see what they offer

Helpful Resources

- **Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS)** Physical Activity and Women 55-70 Resources www.caaws.ca/women55plus/index.cfm
- **The Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging (CCAA)** www.ccaa-outreach.com/resources.php
- **Active Living Coalition for Older Adults** www.alcoa.ca/e/index.htm
- **Alberta Centre for Active Living** <http://www.centre4activeliving.ca/category.cgi?c=1;s=4>
- **World Health Organization Age Friendly Cities Guide** www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf
- **Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide** http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/pubs/age_friendly_rural/pdf/AFRRRC_en.pdf

Next Steps

1. Develop your business case to determine what you plan to do.
2. Assess the current organizational and staff capacity you have available to implement your plan.
3. Develop a strategy to build capacity where you need it.



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For more information on the *CAAWS Women 55–70 and Physical Activity* project please contact caaws@caaws.ca or visit the website at: www.caaws.ca/women55plus/index.cfm

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