



Reimagining Aging in Place

Seniors and Accessibility Committee

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About the study

With the University Health Network and Women's Age Lab at Women's College Hospital, Barrie Housing is taking part in a **research study** to understand how to support older adults to age in place in Barrie.

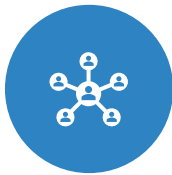
- 6-year federally funded study, currently in year 3
- 3 Barrie Housing research sites

Objectives

- Evaluate the implementation of a support service program to help older adults age in place
- Measuring health and wellness over the course of the project to determine the health impacts of the program offerings

Research Focus Areas

Health Impact



Social
Connection



Nutrition



Physical
Activity

Research Methods

- ▶ Tenant Health and Wellness Survey
- ▶ Interviews with staff
- ▶ Activity tracking data (i.e., program attendance)
- ▶ Health administrative data
- ▶ Field observations
- ▶ Barrie Housing staff notes/tracking data

Findings

- ▶ Early findings show transportation to local services, programs and affordable retail outlets, including grocery stores, is a common challenge among tenants
 - ▶ On Demand system is difficult to navigate and some tenants are not aware of it
- ▶ Older adults living in social housing often live with limited mobility or require mobility aids. Accessible and reliable transportation is essential





Impact of Transportation Barriers

- ▶ Direct impact on health, independence, and quality of life
- ▶ Reduced ability to attend medical appointments, shopping, and social/community programs
 - ▶ Increased social isolation
 - ▶ Higher risk of missed medical care
- ▶ Dependence on family, friends, or costly alternatives

Other Notable Outcomes

1

Strong desire
for on-site
programming
and services

2

Need for more
health and
wellness
supports

3

Interest in peer-
led activities to
strengthen
community ties

Moving Forward

- ▶ Transportation must be prioritized in planning for seniors' supports in Barrie
- ▶ Transportation must be available, accessible and reliable for all citizens of Barrie
- ▶ Investments in mobility = healthier, more connected, and independent aging populations

What is needed:

- ▶ Accessible transportation solutions tailored to older seniors and persons living with disability
- ▶ Shuttle services, ride-share partnerships, or community vans
- ▶ Stronger collaborations with local transit providers
- ▶ Expanded mobile and on-site services to reduce travel needs

Conclusion

While many needs were identified in the research findings, accessible and reliable transportation surfaced as a significant factor impacting seniors' independence, health, and quality of life at the Barrie Housing research sites.

Addressing transportation barriers is key to building Barrie into a stronger, [age-friendly](#) community for everyone.