

## Organizational Capacity Self-Assessment

This tool can be used to consider your organizations current orientation towards service with seniors and identify areas of potential improvement.

### Management Questions

#### Seniors Perspective

1. Did your agency include the perspectives of seniors in its planning of program mission statements, policies and procedures?
2. If no, what steps does your agency plan to take to include seniors in its planning of program mission statements, policies, and procedures (e.g. consumer advisory boards, community advisory councils, advocacy groups)?
3. Are any of your agency's staff, board members, committee members, and/or consumer advisory board members from the senior/elderly/older community? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
4. If yes, what knowledge and skills do they have that can help your agency better serve this population?
5. If no, what steps does your agency plan to take to provide representation from seniors while offering services to its older adult population?
6. What are your agency's plans to ensure that client input is used in the planning of services and their delivery (e.g. focus groups, interviews, consumer advisory boards, surveys)?

#### Staff Experience and Training

1. Are any of your staff experienced in serving this population, either with your agency or with other agencies? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
2. If yes, what knowledge and skills did they gain to help your agency provide better services to the senior population (e.g. bilingual skills, established relationships with trusted community organizations, knowledge of neighbourhood, advisory board members)?
3. Which resources do you use to provide staff with training on providing services to seniors?
4. Has your agency offered staff opportunities to learn about Homeless Seniors and their needs? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
5. If yes, please describe how these learning opportunities can help your agency provide better services to this population.

#### Legal Requirements

1. Which legal requirements (e.g. anti-discrimination laws, population targeting requirements, translation requirements) regarding service accessibility apply to services you provide to homeless seniors?
2. Which steps does your agency plan to take to ensure that its policies, procedures, and services are aligned with legal requirements regarding service accessibility for homeless seniors (e.g. anti-discrimination laws, service population targeting requirements)?

## Service Provision

1. Which services does your agency provide that would be the most valuable to homeless seniors?
2. When your services do not fit or are not valued in a community, what do you do to address or correct this?
3. Can you currently demonstrate organizational operational knowledge around serving the homeless seniors populations? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
4. If yes, how do you concretely demonstrate this knowledge?

## Frontline Staff

### Understanding Seniors

1. What have you learned about serving senior people that could be helpful in providing better services?
2. What feedback has your agency received about the senior perspective of your services?
3. How might your agency improve or enhance this perspective?
4. How would you characterize senior people accessing service (e.g. difficult to serve, need informal relationships, high dependency on care-giving networks)?
5. What is this characterization based on (e.g. data, feedback from individuals outside of the senior/older community, feedback from individuals within the older community, service providers, staff observation)?

### Training and Resources

1. Which resources do you use to obtain current information on providing services to seniors?
2. Which organizations, including current partners, can assist your agency and staff with learning how best to serve an older population?
3. Is there additional training or technical assistance that would be helpful in serving seniors?

### Service Delivery

1. Which services does your agency provide that would be the most valuable to homeless seniors?
2. What are the structural barriers that limit services for this group (e.g. transportation, health, literacy/education, income)?

*Structural Barrier Definition:* Technical or logistical factors that limit a person's ability to access services

3. Which steps does your agency plan to take to reduce or eliminate structural barriers for homeless seniors?
4. What are the cultural barriers that limit services to homeless seniors (e.g. stigma of accepting help, values concerning gender/family roles, religious/spiritual beliefs)?

*Cultural Barrier Definition:* A difference in cultural values and perceptions about treatment, care and services that limit a person's ability to access services

5. Which steps does your agency plan to take to reduce or eliminate cultural barriers to services for the homeless seniors population?

## Demographic Assessment

What do national, state, and local data reveal about the needs of the senior community (e.g., education, income, living arrangements)?

- a. Public transportation  
Good\_\_\_ Fair\_\_\_ Poor\_\_\_
  - b. Economic stability of the people using services  
Good\_\_\_ Fair\_\_\_ Poor\_\_\_
  - c. Opportunities for community involvement (e.g. socialization, volunteerism, clubs)  
Good\_\_\_ Fair\_\_\_ Poor\_\_\_
  - d. Community-based supports (e.g. family, church, grassroots organizations)  
Good\_\_\_ Fair\_\_\_ Poor\_\_\_
  - e. Social service resources  
Good\_\_\_ Fair\_\_\_ Poor\_\_\_
  - f. Environmental conditions (e.g. pollution/air quality, community safety)  
Good\_\_\_ Fair\_\_\_ Poor\_\_\_
1. How can the information from questions one to six influence the types of services your agency provides for homeless seniors?
  2. Is this homeless population historically an immigrant community? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
  3. If yes, how will the issue of immigration influence the types of services your agency provides (e.g. legal services, housing and employment)?

## Outreach Considerations

1. How should outreach materials be improved or implemented to better serve the homeless senior population?
2. Do outreach materials show pictures of individuals from that population? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
3. Are outreach materials language-appropriate/bilingual? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
4. Do outreach materials discuss public accessibility of services (e.g. building accessibility and which bus line, subway stop, transportation companies provide access to the service area)?  
Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
5. If no, what steps does your agency plan to take to inform the homeless seniors population of service accessibility?
6. How are outreach materials pilot tested/reviewed, and by whom in the community (e.g. focus groups, interviews, surveys, consumer advisory board)?
7. Do marketing/outreach materials indicate the availability of bilingual staff, including sign language interpreter(s)? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

**Based on:** Aging Agencies: A Tool Kit for Serving Diverse Communities

<http://metro.kingcounty.gov/tops/kccsnt/pdf/admin-on-agings-toolkit-for-serving-diverse-communities.pdf>