## Integration of Health & Social Services as a Means Towards Addressing Health Equity for Vulnerable Older Adults: Perspectives from Clients & Services Providers In Alberta, Ontario & Nova Scotia

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### Integrating Health & Social Care (IHSC) – Multiple Case Study Approach

#### 1. Geriatric Services Partnerships, GAPC (Camrose, AB)
- A community-based integrated health and social care initiative (GAPC) that targets geriatric patients in Camrose and surrounding districts
- Data based on 11 key informant interviews and one focus group

#### 2. Middleton Day Program, MDP (Annapolis Region, NS)
- A day program comprised of partnerships across four health and social service organizations serving older adult clients
- Data based on 2 key informant interviews

#### 3. Healthy At Home, H@H (Toronto, ON)
- A day program comprised of health and social care organizations with 20 sites across Toronto that serve older adult clients
- Data based on 6 key informant interviews

#### 4. Toronto Community Housing, TCH (Toronto, ON)
- Social housing landlord with over 27,000 older tenants
- Data based on 116 interviews with older tenants and staff from housing, community care & primary care supporting older tenants

### IHSC Supports Health Equity

- Creating a Single Point of Access
  - Co-locating community hubs in TCH, ON facilitates access to services for older adult tenants.

- Providing More Appropriate Referrals
  - H@H, ON refers to culturally & linguistically appropriate services for Jewish older adult clients

- Fostering Comprehensive Care
  - GAPC, AB addresses complex medical conditions (chronic & acute conditions) & social care issues (income supports & social isolation)

- Disease Prevention & Health Promotion
  - MDP, NS offers falls prevention, healthy eating, social & recreational programs to enable healthier & more active living

### Factors Enabling Service Integration

- **Partnership Agreements**
  - Agreements outline obligations of partners to foster commitment, confidence & trust

- **System Transformation**
  - Gov’t agendas shift funding & services across sectors to drive collaboration
  - Alberta’s anti-psychotic policy encouraged new partnerships to find alternative, non-drug approaches to care

- **Identifying Champions**
  - Individuals who advocate & facilitate partnerships to better support clients
  - Bernard Betel for H@H actively seeks collaborations with other providers to better serve clients

- **Partnership Flexibility**
  - Flexible services enable more responsive care for older clients
  - Health and support services are tailored for each TCH building to align with needs and wants of tenants

- **Lessons Learned For Health and Social Services Integration For Older Adults Within a Canadian Context**

  - **Context Matters**
    - National, provincial, regional, & local factors influence success of integration
    - Close-knit communities are more likely to engage in partnerships to serve their members

  - **Sectors Have Different Norms**
    - Housing, health, & social care sectors have different norms that impact integration
    - Compared to health, housing & social care sectors are less likely to monitor & evaluate services

  - **Technology Not Essential for Integration**
    - Although technology can ease services integration, it is not essential in enabling it
    - Health & social care partners developed processes and procedures to overcome technology gaps

  - **Complexity Requires Coordination**
    - Highly complex clients require greater levels of service integration to support wellbeing
    - Isolated clients living in poverty &/or with dementia &/or other co-morbid conditions require greater support from integrated partners

### Challenges & Achievements

- **Ongoing Challenges Providing IHSC**
  - Lack of shared goals and vision inhibited scaling of coordination
  - Bureaucracy resulted in red tape that slowed service coordination
  - Information sharing between agencies & across sectors is difficult

- **Moving Towards Integration**
  - Clarifying roles & responsibilities to reduce turfism among partners
  - Building trust among service providers across different sectors through strong communication

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*Illustrations and diagrams are not transcribed but are included in the document.*