

RESEARCH ROUNDUP

Intergenerational Housing Models



NATIONAL INNOVATION HUB • CENTRE NATIONAL D'INNOVATION



Introduction

At APPTA, we strive to find relevant and timely research that has the potential to influence policy decision making for the aging population. One way of doing this is through our Research Roundup series. Our team devotes time to reading and prioritizing academic papers and grey literature, and investigates programming and products that foster innovation related to how we care for older adults. We then summarize that information for a quick and consumable product. These periodical documents will summarize evidence based on relevant policy topics that are discussed through our ongoing stakeholder engagement.

If there are particular topics of interest you would like us to investigate, please let us know by emailing Daniel Smiley, Research & Logistics Specialist, at daniel.smiley@dal.ca.

For this roundup, we are looking at *intergenerational housing models* and would like to acknowledge the contribution of Adebusola Adekoya PhD (candidate) University of Waterloo.

What is intergenerational housing?

The simple definition would be a location where people of different generations live together, but intergenerational housing is much more than that. There is no agreed upon definition, since it is not universally understood and practiced in the same way across the world.

Intergenerational housing is more than just bricks and mortar. It provides a safe living space for people of all ages to interact, collaborate, and explore the values of each generation on an ongoing basis. Although how this is done will differ in each setting, the common factors are that intergenerational housing:

- Enables people of different ages to live side by side as good neighbours, to share their talents and resources, develop meaningful relationships, and support each other;
- Foster programs, policies, and practices that promote engagement, cooperation, interaction, and exchange between residents of different generations;
- Provides adequately for the safety, health, education, and basic necessities of life for people of all ages, by taking a partnership or community-led approach to the delivery of services and/or activities;
- Has private spaces and communal areas intended for collective use.¹

1. www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Garland-E-Report-2017-Final.pdf

Literature Review

Learning from intergenerational housing projects in the USA

Garland, E.

2018, UK/US

[Link to article](#)

This report looks at different intergenerational housing models in the United States to see if they could work well in a UK context. The author visited nine different housing schemes, organizations that deliver intergenerational activities and programs, local housing authorities, and non-profit organizations providing supportive services to local communities. The author found that intergenerational housing works particularly well as a model for supported housing, allowing older adults to maintain their independence and delays them moving into costlier accommodations; fosters the creation of friendly, neighbourly, supportive communities; and provides a host of other benefits that cut across health, social care, education, and social services.

Intergenerational housing as a model for improving older-adult health

Suleman, R. & Bhatia, F.

2021, BC

[Link to article](#)

This short article discusses Canada's growing need for alternative housing models as a way to combat poor health outcomes related to loneliness in older adults. The authors reference several Canadian and international intergenerational housing models, stating that there are significant benefits for all involved in intergenerational housing. They believe intergenerational housing projects are gaining traction in Canada and can serve as a method of improving the health and well-being of older adults while providing benefits to society at large.

Intergenerational Housing: The Case of Humanitas Netherlands

Arentshorst, M.E., Kloet, R.R. & Peine, A.

2019, Netherlands

[Link to article](#)

This article analyzes a case study of an innovative intergenerational housing arrangement in the Netherlands, known as Humanitas, as an example of how a local long-term elderly care practice evolved in response to contemporary challenges. As of around 2019, Humanitas had 6 students and over 160 older adult residents. The process did start off as disruptive, but benefits for older adults of intergenerational housing included decreased loneliness while young adults/students got inexpensive housing. The authors hope that there will be other similar projects that create environments in which older adults are not objectified as care recipients but treated as active parts of the community.

Literature Review (continued)

Alternatives to long-term care & housing: Environmental scan

Benzie, A. Cristina Cacciola, C., Chu, D., Barcellos, N., Grant, R., Niehaus, S., & Nsair, S.

2020, Ontario

[Link to article](#)

This environmental scan was written in response to the shortcomings in housing and care for the City of Waterloo, Ontario. The team conducted the scan to seek out alternative housing options. Their key findings were:

- There is a distinction between the emerging approach of aging in community and the more common approaches of aging in place and aging in care. In aging in community models, older adults are better integrated into their communities and are valued members of their communities. These models fill in the gaps of aging in place and address the shortcoming of aging in care by targeting isolation and loneliness and providing social networks of care.
- The City of Waterloo has a suite of tools at their disposal to encourage models that facilitate aging in community. However, to implement these models, community interest must either be pre-existing or stimulated through policy and program facilitation. The City of Waterloo's primary role for implementing aging in community models is to remove existing policy and regulatory barriers, provide fiscal support, and/or partner with NGOs.
- Restrictive zoning was a common barrier to implementation for most housing and care models under the aging in community approach. While the city's official plan provides a supportive foundation for aging in community models, numerous zoning bylaws weaken this supportive foundation. These zoning bylaws are primarily those that prohibit or restrict the existence of mixed-use neighbourhoods, especially those located in low-density areas.

Report on housing needs of seniors

Puxty, J., Rosenberg, M.W., Carver, L., Crow, B., & Queen's University Network of Aging Researchers (QUNAR) for the Federal, Provincial and Territorial (FPT) Forum of Ministers Responsible for Seniors

2019, Canada

[Link to article](#)

This report provides a snapshot of the core housing needs of seniors and senior-led households (when possible by gender, age, and region). The report then expands the study of seniors' housing needs to include aspects not covered in the core housing need definition, such as accessibility, safety, and environmental sustainability. In addition, this report offers an overview of current Canadian and international initiatives that assist seniors in addressing their integrated housing needs. It also examines the potential linkages between the housing market conditions in Canada and integrated housing needs. While the focus of this report is on seniors' integrated housing need, it is important to note the connection between the various housing options available to seniors and the care continuum. Housing options range from living independently in a single-family dwelling to living in a residential care facility with 24/7 nursing and other forms of care. Between the two extremes, there are numerous combinations of housing, medical and non-medical care.

Program Review

Canada HomeShare

National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE)

est. 2018

Alberta, BC, & Ontario

Canada HomeShare began as a pilot project created in 2018 as a City of Toronto initiative, with funding from the Ontario Ministry of Seniors Affairs. The program pairs university students with older adults willing to rent their unused space in exchange for affordable rent (\$400-\$600 per month). Students provide five to seven hours per week of assistance or companionship to older adults providing affordable rents. The program is facilitated by social workers who match applicants based on their preferences and lifestyles and address potential conflicts between both parties. Routine safety checks are conducted to ensure the safety of both parties. Students also undergo a police background check and complete an educational module on elder abuse and how to engage with older adults.

To read a UofT Magazine article on the program, click [here](#).

McMaster Symbiosis

Hamilton Aging in Community

est. 2017

Hamilton, Ontario

This program aims to foster “symbiotic” intergenerational relationships between compatible older adults (ages 55-90) and McMaster University students in a living arrangement that improves quality of life for both parties. The program was implemented by the School of Graduate Studies at McMaster University to provide McMaster students with affordable housing and enhance the social inclusion of older adults in the Greater Hamilton Area, with the support of a SPICES (Student Proposals for Intellectual Community and Engaged Scholarship) grant. The living arrangements supported by the program are made possible as a result of the absence of restrictive regulations.

Harbour Landing Village

Harbour Landing Village

est. 2018

Regina, SK

Harbour Landing Village is a locally owned intergenerational senior care and living residence. The Village offers independent, assisted, and supportive senior living, including personalized on-site care and assistance with activities of daily living and medications, as well as childcare services to encourage engagement and social interaction between generations. In partnership with independent wellness professionals, South Regina Community Associations and local organizations, the Village offers a range of programs and services, including intergenerational and wellness activities, social events, and meal delivery services to residents, older adults in the community, and the public at large.

Program Review (continued)

PSS / WSF Grandparent Family Apartments

Presbyterian Senior Services

est. 2005

New York, US

Grandparent Family Apartments is a collaboration between Presbyterian Senior Services (PSS), West Side Federation For Senior and Supportive Housing, Inc.(WSFSSH), and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). The 50-unit apartment building (40 two-bedroom and 10 three-bedroom) is designed to meet the needs of grandparents who are raising grandchildren and has 55 to 60 grandparents and about 100 grandchildren. Grandparents range from 66-86 years old and children from four months to 24 years. Most residents are grandmothers, and the average household income is \$18,800. Residents usually pay \$300 rent per month. The building offers 24-hour front desk service, a library, a laundry on each floor, senior and youth community rooms, and a green roof garden and relaxation area. The Grandparent Family Apartments also offers a range of services for residents and community members, including educational, health, recreational, social activities, and caregiver support programs.