



17th Annual Report to the Community

2023-2024

For more information, visit us at www.coahamilton.ca





Founded in 2005 by a dedicated group of retired community leaders, professionals, and academics, the Hamilton Council on Aging (HCoA) is a non-profit charity committed to addressing systemic issues affecting seniors. Recognizing the critical need for an independent organization to bridge the gaps between existing agencies and government departments, HCoA was established to advocate for and support older adults in our community. In 2007, we incorporated as a not-for-profit organization, and we proudly achieved Registered Charity status in 2009.



MISSION

We advance positive aging — promoting the health, well-being, and social participation of ALL older adults — by influencing attitudes, policies and programs to include their voices.



VISION

Positive aging is visible in Hamilton.



VALUES

The Hamilton Council on Aging is committed to:

- Inclusion:** We value the wisdom and experience of older adults and their right to experience a high quality of life, free of ageism.
- Diversity:** We value the rich diversity of the Hamilton community and strive to include the many voices of older adults in all our endeavours.
- Collaboration:** We value our shared work with volunteers and community partners, and know that their insights, knowledge, and experience make us stronger.



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Message from the President



HCoA has had a busy and productive year, as evidenced by the activities and accomplishments described in this annual report. The Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers are advocates for positive aging in Hamilton, and I am very thankful for their commitment to the vision, mission, and priorities of our Council.

Over the past year, highlights of funding received from various organizations and governments include:

- › **New Horizons for Seniors Grant (Government of Canada):** To provide Let's Get Moving workshops for seniors.
- › **United Way Halton & Hamilton Seniors4Change:** To expand and enhance Positive Aging and Navigating the Healthcare System peer-led educational workshops,
- › **Support from the Public Health Agency of Canada:** To build on our work in creating Dementia Friendly Communities, with support across four communities (Hamilton, Haldimand, Halton, and Six Nations of the Grand River) to create Empowerment and Engagement Groups and a Dementia Empowerment Network.
- › **Partnership and Support from the City of Hamilton and the Seniors Advisory Committee:** To continue the important work of making Hamilton an Age-Friendly Community.

With support from various organizations and our own Sustainability Committee's fundraising efforts, we have achieved some important milestones for Hamilton, including:

- › **Regular Newsletters:** Published bi-annually, with more frequent publications planned for the upcoming year.
- › **HCoA 5km Walk4Health:** Another successful event this year, focusing on raising funds and building community.
- › **Create with M.I.C.E. Project:** Included MICE+ Haldimand hosting a successful series of arts-based events, culminating in a final exhibit of creations.
- › **Collaboration with the McMaster Occupational Therapy Class of 2025:** To generate recommendations for the development of the Let's Start a Walking Group project.
- › **Seniors Engagement:** With continued support from the City of Hamilton Enrichment Fund, seniors' engagement continues to be at the forefront of all our work.
- › **Prioritizing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:** Ensuring these principles are incorporated into the work of the Age-Friendly Hamilton Collaborative.

By the end of the fiscal year, plans were well underway for this year's Walk4Health, as well as activities to build more age-friendly and dementia-friendly communities, and to promote positive aging through our many workshop offerings. Partnerships with funders, sponsors, and community members continue to build. I am excited to see the progress that we as a Council on Aging are making in Hamilton. If you have questions, comments, or are interested in joining a project, committee, or the board, you are welcome to contact us.

Lori Letts, *President*



2023-2024 Board of Directors

Maria Antelo, *Director*
Angie Armstrong, *Director*
Dale Brown, *Director*
Mary Burnett, *Secretary-Treasurer*
Margaret Denton, *Director*
Kamal Jain, *Director*
Lori Letts, *President*
Joanne Pearson, *Vice President*
Ashley Sumler, *Director*
Mary Tice, *Director*
Carolyn Triemstra, *Director*
Heather E. Watson, *Director*





Executive Committee

Lori Letts, *Chair and Board President*

The Executive Committee is responsible for keeping HCoA's operations running smoothly and making sure its policies and by-laws are up to date. Though their work may not always be visible, it is essential for maintaining a strong foundation for the organization.

This year, the Executive Committee reviewed three applications for board membership, interviewed all candidates, and welcomed two new members to the Council's committees. These new members will join the Board of Directors in 2024.

The Committee also updated several important policies, including those related to violence, abuse, harassment, and confidentiality, as well as human resource policies.

Thank you to members of the Executive Committee for your dedication and contributions to support the council. Your willingness to take on tasks to ensure smooth and successful operations is essential for supporting our many successes.



Finance Committee

Mary Burnett, *Chair and Board Treasurer*

The Finance and Audit Committee meets regularly to ensure that HCoA operates in a financially prudent manner with appropriate controls, checks, and balances. We monitor revenues and expenditures related to grants received from multiple levels of government, which support the many programs and services offered by the Council. The Committee is pleased to share our 2023-24 Audited Financial Statements, a summary of which can be found at the end of this report.



Sustainability Committee

Dale Brown & Mary Tice, *Co-Chairs*

The Sustainability Committee works to ensure the financial stability of HCoA, enabling us to have a greater impact in the community. Funds raised in past campaigns have supported the educational workshops aimed at promoting positive aging and well-being.

This year, the Sustainability Committee raised a grand total of \$20,088!

Much of this was raised through the organization of a 5km Walk4Health fundraiser, which took place on June 3, 2023, at T.B. McQuesten Park.

Over 75 walkers participated, raising a total of \$16,471, with \$1,650 donated to United Way Halton & Hamilton. The United Way funds numerous community projects, including those supported by the HCoA, for which we are very grateful.

We extend our thanks to WellWise by Shoppers Drug Mart and the Village of Wentworth Heights-Schlegel Villages for their generous support of the Walk. We also appreciate the many local businesses that provided refreshments, snacks, and swag.





Community Outreach Committee

Lori Letts, *Chair and Board President*

The Community Outreach Committee is responsible for facilitating communications between HCoA and the communities it serves, as well as with partners working towards positive aging in Hamilton. This year, the committee has focused on streamlining our process to communicate with our broad network of community members and organizations through the HCoA newsletter.

In the past year, we supported the preparation and distribution of two newsletters and introduced a new column to highlight volunteers who support the important work of the HCoA.

For the upcoming year, we are committed to doubling the frequency of our newsletters. Look for editions in December, March, June, and September each year.

In addition to our work on the newsletter, our committee manages the HCoA website and the annual report. Over the past year, we made minor adjustments to ensure that the newsletter is easily accessible on the website. A plan is now underway to refine the organization and accessibility of information on the HCoA website.

The work of the Community Outreach Committee is crucial for engaging with the citizens of Hamilton.



Anyone interested in subscribing to the HCoA newsletter can sign up at:
www.coahamilton.ca





Education and Advocacy Committee

Dale Brown and Margaret Denton, *Co-Chairs*

The Education and Advocacy Committee works to identify timely issues relevant to local older adults, provides educational programs to promote positive aging, and tackles ageism through various activities. The Committee provided oversight to the 2023 funded projects: United Way Halton & Hamilton Seniors4Change and the Government of Canada New Horizons Let's Get Moving educational projects, which are detailed further in this report.

Each month, guests are invited to contribute opinion editorials to the Spectator. Opinion editorials are available at www.coahamilton.ca/in-the-news.

Topics from the past year included:

- “Improving Emergency Care for Older Adults” (Andra Linetski)
- “How to Build More Age-Friendly Cities” (Rebecca Ganann)
- “Help and Support for Naturally Occurring Retirement Community Residents” (Lori Letts)
- “Older Adults Need More Housing Options” (Sharon Livingstone, Lilian Wells, Margaret Denton, and Dominic Ventresca)
- “Seniors Are at a Higher Risk for Frauds and Scams” (Margaret Denton)
- “Older Adults Dedicated to Social Justice” (Maria Antelo)
- “Combatting Ageism in Health Care in 2024” (Yasmin Khalili)
- “Retirement Investment Strategies Depend on Your Income Level and Are Different for Lower-Income People” (Margaret Denton)
- “Reduce Your Alzheimer’s Risk One Step at a Time” (Jennifer J. Heisz & Emma Waddington)
- “A Reminder for Older Adults: Stay Up-to-Date with Vaccines to Protect Yourself and Others” (Rose Lee and Andra Linetski), and
- “Hamilton Organizations Can Help Us Continue to Live in Our Homes Safely” (Jeanne Mayo)

When appropriate, we invite guests to our meetings to learn more about their work, help them understand the role of HCoA, and explore partnership opportunities.

A recent guest was Hamilton Police Service Constable Lalla, the new Senior Support Officer following the retirement of Constable Andrea McLaughlin. Members of the Committee also represent the HCoA on the Ontario Association of Councils on Aging and their Education and Planning Committee. Additionally, they advise the committee on relevant issues from the Ontario Age-Friendly Outreach Network and other aging-related organizations.



2023-2024

Funded Program Reports

The work of the Hamilton Council on Aging (HCoA) is primarily made possible through grant funding aligned with our three strategic priorities: (1) Bringing forward the voices and perspectives of older adults on issues of concern; (2) Creating an age-friendly and dementia-friendly community and reducing ageism; and (3) Delivering education and programming to increase the participation of older adults in the community.

Funded projects are each sponsored by an HCoA director who provides strategic leadership, oversight, and guidance to project staff, volunteers, and community partners for the Board of Directors.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all 2023-24 project funders, partners, staff, and volunteers for helping to advance our vision to make positive aging visible in Hamilton.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:

Bringing forward the voices and perspectives of older adults on issues of concern

Seniors Engagement

Funded by the City of Hamilton

Lori Letts, *Board Sponsor*



Hamilton

HCoA is grateful to the City of Hamilton Enrichment Grant for its long-term support of our Seniors Engagement Program.

Hamilton's older adults and seniors bring a wealth of skills, experiences, and diverse backgrounds to our community. We are dedicated to including seniors in leadership roles throughout all its programs and activities. We highly value the wisdom and experience of older adults and are committed to ensuring they enjoy a high quality of life, free from ageism.

Seniors contribute significantly as board members, program developers, leaders, advisors, and participants. By involving older adults as volunteers and contributors, HCoA benefits from their expertise and rich experiences, which significantly enhances the impact of our initiatives.

Programs and activities led by seniors not only support our goals but also enrich the community. Senior volunteers are essential in shaping positive aging experiences for everyone in Hamilton, aligning with the mission, vision, values, and priorities of HCoA.

Age-Friendly Hamilton

Funded by the City of Hamilton

Angie Armstrong & Carolyn Triemstra, *Board Sponsors*



Hamilton

Since 2007, Age-Friendly Hamilton has been dedicated to promoting positive aging, aligning with Hamilton’s vision to be “the best place to raise a child and age successfully.” As we reach the midpoint of implementing Hamilton’s Plan for an Age-Friendly Community (2021-2026), this has been a year of growth, showcasing our community’s collaborative spirit toward this goal.

In 2023, we began by assessing our structure to enhance ongoing success. Thanks to candid discussions and feedback from our members, we refined roles, particularly clarifying responsibilities for our dedicated Goal Champions. These champions are instrumental in uniting our community, fostering collaboration, and driving initiatives aligned with the goals of our Age-Friendly Plan.



Their efforts have strengthened teamwork, engagement, and commitment, which are crucial for successfully implementing our plan. Going forward, we are committed to supporting Goal Champions in fostering collective brainstorming and collaboration.

We also made great strides with our annual Age-Friendly Community Success Survey, which saw a 60% increase in submissions compared to last year. We received 81 success stories from a diverse range of stakeholders, highlighting impactful initiatives that support Age-Friendly Hamilton. In collaboration with the Redbook of Hamilton, we enhanced the survey to include updates to our local information system, improving the accessibility and reliability of community information.

The 2023 Age-Friendly Hamilton Progress Report, including these 81 community success stories, will be released in September 2024.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) has been a key focus this year. We initiated outreach and engagement to develop an EDI framework tailored to the needs of Age-Friendly Hamilton. This framework will promote equitable participation and foster a stronger sense of community and belonging within our initiatives.

Looking ahead, we are excited about our future goals, particularly the development of a Strategic Communication and Diverse Community Engagement Strategy. This strategy will ensure that Age-Friendly Hamilton authentically reflects and supports the diverse voices of all older adults in Hamilton.

Thank you to our partners: The City of Hamilton, City of Hamilton Seniors Advisory Committee, collaborative goal champions, strategic partners, and all citizens and community members who have contributed to shaping our Age-Friendly Hamilton, where every older adult can age positively and contribute meaningfully to our community.

 Please visit www.hamilton.ca/agefriendly to learn more about Age-Friendly Hamilton.



Create with M.I.C.E.

*Funded by the New Horizons for Seniors Program,
Government of Canada*

Joanne Pearson, *Board Sponsor*

M.I.C.E. stands for Memory+ Inclusive Communities Everywhere. This year, HCoA was proud to collaborate with M.I.C.E. Haldimand on a project entitled Create with M.I.C.E., supported by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program.

The M.I.C.E. team, composed of Haldimand County citizens who share experiences with memory loss and cognitive challenges, aims to inspire and create a kinder, more inclusive community. From 2023 to 2024, M.I.C.E. focused on their Create with M.I.C.E. project, which involved designing and developing five community-based workshops and events. These initiatives were intended to educate, inspire, and engage local community members in creating memory-inclusive communities for everyone. The events included a ceramic painting workshop, a boat paddle painting event, a "Choir Sing Along Pop Up" event, a "Free Seminar" with healthcare professionals,

and a 2024 M.I.C.E. Final Showcase event. All events were well-attended, drawing many local community members, healthcare professionals, and individuals with diverse backgrounds and cognitive challenges. Additionally, in 2024, the M.I.C.E. group won the Haldimand Norfolk Community Senior Support Services (HNCSSS) trivia nights twice, with their success and a feature photo appearing in the Haldimand Press!

Special thanks to the M.I.C.E. team for your incredible work in creating and inspiring memory-inclusive communities everywhere (M.I.C.E.)!

 To learn more about M.I.C.E. and their current efforts to promote dementia-friendly communities, visit www.MICEHaldimand.ca.



Engagement & Empowerment Groups: Place-based community organizing for dementia inclusive communities, Six Nations, Hamilton, Haldimand, Halton

*Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada
Dementia Community Investment*

Mary Burnett, *Board Sponsor*



HCoA is building on the success of the Empowering Dementia Friendly Communities Hamilton-Haldimand project (2020-2023) with a new \$722,593 investment from the Public Health Agency of Canada for 2023-2025. This project is continuing to support the development of dementia-friendly communities in Hamilton.

As well, it will build on established partnerships with organizations and communities of Haldimand County, Halton Region, and Six Nations of the Grand River to support existing groups and pilot new dementia empowerment groups. The number of these social groups which are led by citizens with mild to moderate dementia has significantly increased, demonstrating their value and meaningful impact.

The project will support groups to co-design a “How to Create Engagement and Empowerment Groups” guide and establish the Dementia Empowerment Network (DEN) for mutual support and a collective voice.

Working together with persons living with dementia, the Alzheimer Society of Brant, Haldimand Norfolk, Hamilton, Halton, McMaster University’s Gilbrea Centre for Studies on Aging, GERAS Centre for Aging Research and Six Nations of the Grand River, we hope to support the development of dementia friendly communities, learn more about the personal and community impacts of Engagement and Empowerment groups and share our learning of this approach to improve the life of diverse community members who live with dementia.



To learn more about this project and the Dementia Empowerment Network, visit www.DENVOICES.ca.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:

Delivering education and programming to increase the participation of older adults in the community

Let's Get Moving

Funded by the New Horizons for Seniors Program, Government of Canada

Margaret Denton, *Board Sponsor*

With funding from the New Horizons for Seniors Program, HCoA effectively engaged, educated, and empowered older adults in a program entitled Let's Get Moving. Guided by senior leaders, community partners, and experts, four interactive workshops—Let's Take the Bus, Let's Ride a Bike, Let's Talk a Walk, and Let's Drive a Car—were designed and delivered to educate senior participants and boost their confidence in utilizing different transportation methods to actively participate in community life.

The project promoted active transportation to motivate older adults to adopt alternative transportation methods, which led to increased involvement in recreational activities, enriched social interactions, and improved access to essential health and community services. The project also successfully enlisted volunteers from diverse backgrounds as leaders, facilitators, and mentors. Equipped with essential tools, resources, and training, these Senior Leaders facilitated workshops for their peers.

Collaborative efforts with community partners, including ethnocultural and ethnolinguistic groups like Hamilton Jewish Family Services

and Good Shepherd's Social Program for seniors from Chinese and South Asian communities, ensured the program's inclusivity, adapting as needed for seniors to participate in and benefit from the workshops.

Overall, this project successfully delivered 43 workshops to 950 seniors in greater Hamilton over 1.5 years. Looking ahead, Let's Get Moving workshops will continue and expand under the United Way Seniors4Change Program and a new initiative funded by New Horizons: Let's Start a Walking Group.

Thank you to New Horizons of Canada, our community partners, participants, and volunteers for making Let's Get Moving a successful model to support positive aging.



To learn more, please visit

www.coahamilton.ca/workshops



Seniors4Change

Funded by the United Way Halton & Hamilton

Dale Brown, *Board Sponsor*



This year, the United Way Seniors4Change Program continued to provide education to enhance the well-being and social inclusion of older adults. Through a series of evidence-informed, peer-led workshops, the Seniors4Change program engaged, empowered, and educated seniors across greater Hamilton.

In 2023-24, the program achieved several key milestones. The Positive Aging Series was updated with the latest research and interactive learning formats by dedicated peer leaders, ensuring participants remained engaged and informed. We expanded our new workshop series to reach more groups, helping older adults make informed healthcare decisions and navigate the often-complex healthcare system. Let's Get Moving workshops were integrated into the Seniors4Change catalogue, providing a sustainable way to continuing offering these workshops to educate on various transportation options. Additionally, the program expanded its reach and partnerships, working with 40 partners to offer 89 workshops to 1,093 seniors.

The success of the Seniors4Change program is thanks to program volunteers, who are essential in developing workshops, managing activities, and educating peers.

In 2023, six dedicated volunteers were honored with nominations for the Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. Congratulations to Cheryl Fenn, Frances Lester, Anne Pizzacalla, Mary Tice, Catherine Thomas, and Diane VanMeeteren and thank you for your exceptional dedication over more than five years of volunteer service.

We extend our sincerest gratitude to the entire Seniors4Change volunteer team for your outstanding contributions!

Looking ahead, we are excited to announce that the United Way of Halton & Hamilton has made a three-year commitment to continue growing the Seniors4Change program (2024-2027). This support will facilitate the program's expansion, allowing for even more workshops and activities to educate, engage, and empower seniors across our diverse community.



To learn more, please visit www.coahamilton.ca/workshops.

Contact:

✉ shelagh@hamiltoncoa.com

☎ 905-920-7721 to register

or organize a free Seniors4Change workshop for your organization or seniors' group.





FINANCIALS

HCOA 2023-24 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2024	2023
ASSETS		
Cash	158,562	58,356
Grants Receivable		60,000
Prepaid Expenses	7,227	6,576
HST Receivable	13,070	6,380
Due from HHSC	-41	9,118
	178,818	140,430
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	81,766	24,459
Deferred Grants	9,088	48,407
	90,854	72,866
Unrestricted Funds	87,964	67,564
	178,818	140,430

NOTE 2 DEFERRED GRANTS		
Balance Beginning of Year	48,407	46,423
Amount Received during Year	414,070	373,922
Amount Recognized as Revenue	453,389	371,938
	9,088	48,407

HCOA 2023-24 STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	2024	2023
REVENUE		
Grants	453,389	371,938
Donations	20,088	9,623
	473,477	381,561
EXPENDITURES		
Administration	41,440	28,770
Programs & Workshops	234,824	211,195
Wages & Benefits	176,813	120,535
	453,077	360,500
Excess Revenue over Expenses	20,400	21,061

NOTE 2 GRANTS ARE COMPOSED OF THE FOLLOWING		
Public Health Agency of Canada	323,004	250,000
Ministry of Seniors & Accessibility		4,095
City of Hamilton	68,725	52,818
United Way Halton & Hamilton	20,000	23,185
Alzheimer Society Foundation		35,000
Government of Canada (New Horizons for Seniors)	41,660	4,340
Other Grants	0	2,500
	453,389	371,938

 2023-2024 HCoA Audited Financial Statements are available online www.coahamilton.ca.

We proudly secured
\$453,389

in funding this year,
fueling our mission-driven
programs and initiatives.



Our dedicated fundraising
efforts yielded

\$20,088

a testament to the unwavering
commitment of our supporters.

These funds are crucial for
sustaining and enhancing our
impactful work, ensuring we
continue to drive positive change.



This year, our programs
and initiatives touched
the lives of at least

2,988

program recipients,
providing them with
information, support and
resources to age positively.



HCoA 2023-24 Collective Impact



Through media coverage and
the sharing of information,
we have indirectly influenced
approximately

429,500
individuals

This broad reach underscores the
ripple effect of our work and the far-
reaching benefits of our mission.



Our collaborative efforts with

168
partners

have been a cornerstone of
our achievements. By working
together, we have maximized
our impact and advanced our
shared goals.



A heartfelt thank you to the

130
volunteers

who generously dedicated their
time and expertise to drive our
success and expand our reach.

HCOA

Hamilton Council on Aging

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Hamilton Council on Aging is a
Registered Charity

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www.coahamilton.ca



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