

# Older Adult Care Pathway Needs Assessment

## Key Findings

### TIMELINE OF DATA COLLECTION



**761** Surveys collected

**18** One-on-one interviews

### PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

To engage with older adults, caregivers, and service providers to understand the needs of older adults in Lambton County as well as the awareness, access, and usage of the community support and health services to identify gaps and opportunities to improve the current referral processes.

### PARTICIPANT BREAKDOWN

#### Participants

OLDER ADULTS (Adults 55+)	CAREGIVERS (Caring for an adult 55+)	SERVICE PROVIDERS (Supports and interacts with adults 55+)
597 Survey Participants 11 Interview Participants	231 Survey Participants 5 Interview Participants	70 Survey Participants 2 Interview Participants

### OLDER ADULTS

#### Needs

##### TOP OLDER ADULT NEEDS:

1. Aging in Place
2. Financial Assistance
3. Social Needs
4. Transportation

**4.4 out of 5**  
Aging in place was rated most important

**3.3 out of 5**

However, participants do not strongly believe in the community's ability to support aging in place.

*"A better transportation system for out-of-town appointments when traveling from the hospital in Sarnia to a hospital in London." - Older Adult Survey Participant*

#### Perspectives on Care Coordination

**Strengths:** Older adults reported that they trust service provider, staff are respectful, helpful, courteous, friendly, professional and responsive.

**Weaknesses:** Older adults reported feeling that the referral process for coordinating multiple appointments was not straightforward, and that information about community supports and health services is not clear and accessible.

#### Awareness, Usage, Barriers

Older Adults reported that they were somewhat aware of the community support and health services available in Lambton County.

- Average reported **2.1 out of 3** Older adults most aware of end-of-life services.
- Average reported **1.7 out of 3** Older adults least aware of telephone support programs.

*"I really just simply don't know where to start and how to access those things. (services)." - Caregiver/Older Adult Interview Participant*

<p><b>SUPPORT GROUP</b></p> <p><b>24%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>10%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>37%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Pandemic, Information, Time</b></p>	<p><b>MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND AIDS</b></p> <p><b>23%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>16%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>37%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Health, Pandemic, Cost</b></p>
<p><b>MENTAL HEALTH &amp; ADDICTION</b></p> <p><b>26%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>9%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>54%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Time, Transportation, Pandemic</b></p>	<p><b>END OF LIFE CARE</b></p> <p><b>30%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>6%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>39%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Time, Transportation, Pandemic</b></p>
<p><b>FITNESS AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS</b></p> <p><b>22%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>16%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>43%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Pandemic, Information, Time</b></p>	<p><b>HELP AT HOME</b></p> <p><b>18%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>8%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>54%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Time, Pandemic, Information</b></p>
<p><b>MEALS AND NUTRITION</b></p> <p><b>20%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>7%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>36%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Pandemic, Health, Transportation</b></p>	<p><b>TELEPHONE SUPPORT PROGRAMS</b></p> <p><b>13%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>3%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>35%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Information, Pandemic, Time</b></p>

\*See bottom of document for barrier definitions

### CAREGIVER

#### Needs

##### TOP OLDER ADULT NEEDS AS REPORTED BY CAREGIVERS:

1. Aging in Place
2. Financial Assistance
3. Social Needs
4. Nutrition

**4.3 out of 5**  
Aging in place was rated most important

**3 out of 5**

However, participants do not strongly believe in the community's ability to support aging in place.

*"Cost is a big deterrent to many things." - Caregiver Survey Participant*

#### Perspectives on Care Coordination

**Strengths:** Caregivers reported that they trust their service provider and feel respected and heard.

**Weaknesses:** Caregivers reported feeling that the referral process for coordinating multiple appointments was not straightforward and that information about community support and health services is not clear and accessible.

#### Awareness, Usage, Barriers

Caregivers reported that they were somewhat aware of the community support and health services available in Lambton County.

- Average reported **2.1 out of 3** Caregivers were most aware of medical equipment and aid services.
- Average reported **1.9 out of 3** Caregivers least aware of telephone support programs.

<p><b>SUPPORT GROUP</b></p> <p><b>16%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>22%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>65%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Pandemic, Health, Time</b></p>	<p><b>MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND AIDS</b></p> <p><b>24%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>41%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>63%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Pandemic, Transportation, Health</b></p>
<p><b>MENTAL HEALTH &amp; ADDICTION</b></p> <p><b>23%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>25%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>78%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Transportation, Information, Cost</b></p>	<p><b>END OF LIFE CARE</b></p> <p><b>23%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>25%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>68%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Transportation, Health, Information</b></p>
<p><b>FITNESS AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS</b></p> <p><b>20%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>21%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>84%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Pandemic, Transportation, Information</b></p>	<p><b>HELP AT HOME</b></p> <p><b>22%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>32%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>72%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Information, Pandemic, Health</b></p>
<p><b>MEALS AND NUTRITION</b></p> <p><b>23%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>18%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>61%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Health, Pandemic, Transportation</b></p>	<p><b>TELEPHONE SUPPORT PROGRAMS</b></p> <p><b>18%</b> Aware of Service/Program <b>6%</b> Used this Service/Program <b>62%</b> Of people who used this report difficulties</p> <p>TOP BARRIERS TO ACCESS: <b>Information, Pandemic, Time</b></p>

\*See bottom of document for barrier definitions

### SERVICE PROVIDER PERSPECTIVES

#### Older Adult Needs

##### TOP OLDER ADULT NEEDS:

1. Increased Access to Geriatric Mental Health Supports
2. Increased assistance maintaining property/landscaping or heavy/intense housework
3. Increased Physical Activity
4. Access to Nutrition Support

#### Caregiver Needs

##### TOP NEEDS FOR CAREGIVERS:

1. Increased information for life transition planning (e.g. moving to long term care)
2. More mental health supports to deal with caregiver stresses
3. Additional assistance coordinating medical appointments
4. Increased assistance for financial support with caregiving

*"A 'one stop shop' for information for caregivers trying to coordinate services for their loved ones" - Service Provider Comment*

#### Perspectives on Care Coordination

**Strengths:** Service providers reported that they feel trusted by the people they serve and feel like they are able to build a connection with the people that they serve.

**Weaknesses:** Service providers reported that care coordination and the referral process is not straightforward and information about community supports and health services are not clear and accessible.

*"Coordination involves several phone calls to multiple service agencies, each service has their own mandate which causes barriers to service." - Service Provider Comment*

#### Awareness, Usage, Barriers

Service providers reported that they were somewhat aware of the community support and health services available in Lambton County.

- Average reported **2.3 out of 3** Service providers most aware of support groups.
- Average reported **2 out of 3** Service providers least aware of telephone support programs.

\***Pandemic:** Difficulties directly experienced due to the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic including lockdown, restrictions, and anxiety contributed directly to the pandemic.

\***Information:** Did not know where to go or who to contact to acquire information which created difficulties accessing the service/support.

\***Health:** Difficulties occurred directly due to health issues (i.e., medical complications and/or chronic medical conditions) that affected the ability to access the service/support.

\***Time:** The Service/Support was not available at a time that allowed you to utilize it easily.

\***Transportation:** Transportation issues (i.e., public transit, personal vehicle, caregiver vehicle) made it difficult to access services/supports.