



ALBERTA ASSOCIATION
ON GERONTOLOGY
Improving the Lives of Older Albertans

AAGmag

Fall 2024 Edition

Autumn mornings: sunshine and crisp air, birds and calmness, year's end and day's beginnings." – Terri Guillemets



**Spotlight on
Alberta Association on Gerontology**

Don't forget to register for our upcoming
Networking Event! We'd love to see you there!

Tickets on sale until September 24, 2024.

Register
Now!



ALBERTA ASSOCIATION
ON GERONTOLOGY

Improving the Lives of Older Albertans

Networking Dinner

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE IN ALBERTA

Speaker

Erin O'Neill

Assistant Deputy Minister
Primary Care Alberta Health



Glenora Park

10150 Clifton Pl NW,
Edmonton, AB T5N 3J1



Wednesday,



October 2, 2024

4:30 -5 PM Glenora Park Tours

5- 6 PM Dinner & Networking



6- 7:00 PM **Speaker:**

Erin O'Neill

Assistant Deputy Minister

cogir

SENIOR LIVING

Tickets

AAG Members: \$45

Non-members: \$55

Zoom Members: Free
(link will be emailed)

*Tickets on sale until
September 24, 2024*

Buffet Dinner
crafted by
Chef Doreen Prei

PAYPAL



SPOTLIGHT ON ALBERTA ORGANIZATIONS

**Imagine Citizens Network: Shaping a Person-Centered Healthcare
System in Alberta**

Who They Are

Imagine Citizens Network is an Alberta-based, independent, citizen-led organization that has been dedicated to transforming the healthcare system to be more person-centered since 2015. Their mission is to ensure that the voices of Albertans are heard and that healthcare is designed with their needs and priorities at the forefront.

Imagine Citizens Network is made up of a diverse group of individuals united by a shared commitment to improving healthcare in Alberta. As patients, family members, caregivers, and even healthcare providers, both working and retired, they bring a wealth of lived experience and perspectives. They are neighbors, colleagues, and friends from all corners of the province, coming together to advocate for a healthcare system that truly reflects the needs of its people.

Vision for the Future

Imagine Citizens Network envisions a healthcare system intentionally designed in partnership between citizens and other stakeholders to achieve the best possible experiences and outcomes for all Albertans. By working together, they believe in creating a system where every voice matters, and every individual is empowered to participate in their healthcare journey.

What They Stand For

At Imagine Citizens Network, the power of citizen engagement and community is at the core of their work. Their guiding principles include:

- **Citizen-Driven:** Led by the voices and experiences of Albertans.
- **Independent:** Non-partisan and maintaining independence by securing diverse funding sources.
- **Connected and Collaborating:** Building partnerships and working alongside other organizations and individuals.
- **Co-Designing Healthcare:** Believing in designing healthcare with citizens, not just for them.
- **Guided by Evidence:** Basing actions and advocacy on evidence and real-world data.
- **Health Beyond Healthcare:** Recognizing that healthcare is only one of many determinants of health.

Focus Areas

Imagine Citizens Network's primary focus areas are **community-based health and care** and **digital health**. These areas impact every Albertan's life, from accessing primary health services to navigating the digital health landscape. The organization is committed to ensuring these areas reflect the needs and priorities of the community, making healthcare more accessible, efficient, and person-centered.

What They Do

- **Listen:** Engaging with Albertans through surveys, forums, and deep dialogues to understand their healthcare needs and priorities.
- **Learn:** Empowering individuals and communities to take ownership of their health journeys, providing tools and resources that help them navigate the healthcare system more effectively.
- **Link:** Connecting Albertans with community organizations, healthcare providers, and each other to foster collaboration and drive local change.
- **Lead:** Amplifying the voices of Albertans to influence policy and advocating for systems-level changes that prioritize citizen involvement and shared decision-making.

For more information or to get involved, visit Imagine Citizens website (<https://imaginecitizens.ca>) or connect with them on social media.

SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



What is Asset-Based Community Development?

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) is a strategy for fostering sustainable, community-driven development by focusing on the strengths and assets already present within a community. Unlike traditional

approaches that often highlight a community's deficiencies or needs, ABCD is centered around identifying and mobilizing existing resources, skills, and relationships to drive local economic opportunities and enhance community resilience.

How Does ABCD Work?

The ABCD approach begins with a thorough process of "asset mapping," which involves identifying the talents, skills, and resources of individuals, associations, and institutions within a community. This process uncovers the often-overlooked assets that can be mobilized to create positive change. Rather than concentrating on what a community lacks, ABCD encourages utilizing what is already available, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment among community members.

Once these assets are identified, they are matched with people or groups who have an interest or need in those specific resources. This helps build stronger connections and collaboration within the community, ensuring that development efforts are grounded in local strengths and driven by those who are directly affected.

The Power of Community Relationships

A key element of ABCD is the emphasis on local relationships and associations. These groups, whether formal or informal, play a vital role in driving the community development process. They serve as vehicles through which a community's assets can be connected and leveraged to multiply their effectiveness and impact. By focusing on these relationships, ABCD not only fosters a stronger sense of community but also promotes sustainable development that is led by community members themselves, rather than by external agencies.

ABCD also addresses the shift in modern society where people often rely on professionals for assistance rather than turning to their neighbors. This reliance on external help can lead to feelings of isolation and a loss of

community support. By encouraging communities to recognize and utilize their own skills and resources, ABCD helps to rebuild the social fabric and empower individuals to see themselves as valuable contributors.

Principles of ABCD

ABCD operates on several guiding principles that help shape its approach:

- **Everyone Has Gifts:** Every individual has something valuable to contribute. ABCD emphasizes the importance of recognizing and mobilizing these gifts.
- **Relationships Build Community:** Strong relationships are the foundation of community development. ABCD focuses on building and nurturing these connections.
- **Citizens at the Center:** Community members are engaged as active participants and leaders, not just recipients of services.
- **Leaders Involve Others:** Community leaders encourage broader participation and engagement, fostering a culture of inclusion and collaboration.
- **Listen and Ask:** Effective community building requires listening to understand people's motivations and asking questions that invite participation and action.

The Role of Cormac Russell in ABCD

Cormac Russell, a leading advocate of ABCD, has played a pivotal role in advancing and promoting this approach globally. With over two decades of experience in community development, Cormac has been instrumental in demonstrating how communities can use the ABCD framework to harness their own strengths and drive positive change. Through his work with organizations such as Nurture Development, Cormac has helped numerous communities around the world to shift their focus from deficits to assets, empowering them to become the architects of their own development. His teachings emphasize the importance of community-driven action, local leadership, and the power of social capital, which are all core elements of the ABCD philosophy.

The Benefits of ABCD

ABCD offers numerous benefits to communities by leveraging local assets and fostering strong relationships:

- **Empowerment:** By focusing on what communities already have, ABCD empowers individuals and groups to take ownership of their development, creating a sense of pride and accomplishment.
- **Sustainability:** Solutions developed through ABCD are often more sustainable because they are rooted in the community's own resources and culture.
- **Resilience:** Communities become more resilient to challenges when they build on their strengths and develop robust social networks.
- **Inclusion:** ABCD promotes inclusivity by valuing everyone's contributions and ensuring that development efforts benefit all members of the community.

The Role of Social Capital in ABCD

Social capital, the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, plays a critical role in ABCD. It represents the collective value of all social networks and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other. In ABCD, social capital is enhanced by encouraging connections and cooperation between community members, which strengthens trust and collective action.

Asset-Based Community Development is a powerful approach that transforms communities by focusing on their existing strengths and assets. With advocates like Cormac Russell leading the charge, ABCD has gained traction globally, helping communities recognize their potential and take charge of their own futures. By encouraging local participation, building strong relationships, and fostering a sense of empowerment, ABCD creates vibrant, resilient communities capable of driving their development. Through ABCD, communities are viewed not as collections of needs and problems but as rich networks of gifts and assets, ready to be mobilized for positive change.

Asset Based Community Development Resources

- Tamarack Institute: ABCD in Canada
<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/skills-for-change/abcd-canada>
- Cormac Russell will be speaking at the Caregivers Alberta Caregivers Together Conference November 1 and 2 in Edmonton
<https://www.caregiversalberta.ca/get-involved/caregivers-conference/>

- City of Calgary Asset Based Community Development Toolkit <https://www.calgary.ca/social-services/asset-based-community...>
- Connecting People & Community for Living Well Transforming local care and supports to build and sustain wellbeing. <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/scns/Page13526.aspx>

NEW REPORTS

Dementia tracking survey: Knowledge of Dementia final report

Dementia Tracking Survey Final Report Prepared for the Public Health Agency of Canada by EKOS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES INC. Contract award \$199,476.08 including HST, Delivered July 8, 2024

Key Findings

Similar to results from 2020, about three in four respondents know someone who is living or has lived with dementia. For nearly half (47%), this includes an extended family member. Others describe a parent (21%), a friend (20%), neighbour (11%), colleague at work (5%), a spouse or partner (4%), or themselves (1%).

Close to three in four respondents (74%) believe they are moderately (54%) to highly knowledgeable (20%) about dementia. This is similar to 75% who saw themselves as moderately to highly knowledgeable in 2020.

- Most respondents (85%) believe there are things one can do to reduce the risk of dementia, which has increased from 74% in 2020.
- Just under three in five respondents (58%) accurately perceive that the risk of developing dementia is linked to chronic health conditions such as hypertension, heart disease and diabetes.

Awareness of this link to chronic health conditions has increased in this area since 2020 when 37% of respondents identified these as true. More than one in three (37%) know that some ethnic and cultural groups have been identified as being at higher risk of developing dementia, which has

increased since the 32% measured in 2020. One in four (24%) respondents do not believe this to be the case, and 39% are unsure.

Full Report: https://epe.bac-lac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsgc/poref/public_health_agency_canada/2024/091-23-e/091-23-report.html#sc

Resources for Living Well with Dementia University of Waterloo:
<https://uwaterloo.ca/living-well-with-dementia/>

REFLECTIONS FROM JIM MANN ABOUT LIVING WITH DEMENTIA



Watch Video

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Alberta Continuing Care Association: [Catalysts of Change: Advancing Innovation in Continuing Care Transformation](#). Calgary, AB, October 15-17, 2024.

The North American Conference on Integrated Care 2024: [Creating Health with Integrated Care](#), Calgary, AB, October 15-17, 2024.

AGE-WELL: [Shared Visions, Shared Futures: Transforming Aging Together](#), Edmonton, AB, October 23-24, 2024. **NOTE: Registration for Older Adults and Caregivers is \$35.**

Canadian Association on Gerontology: [Agents of Change: Unraveling Complexity and Advancing Transformation](#), Edmonton, AB October 24-26, 2024. **NOTE: Registration for Older Adults and Caregivers is \$100.**

Health Workforce Canada: [Canada Connects: Advancing Health Workforce Solutions](#), Montreal, QC, October 30-31, 2024. In-person or virtual.

Caregivers Alberta: [Caregivers Together](#), Edmonton, AB, November 1-2, 2024. In-person or virtual.



AAG Membership

It's not too late to purchase
membership for 2024/25!

Sign up now!

[Membership Form](#)

AAG - Alberta Association on Gerontology

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