


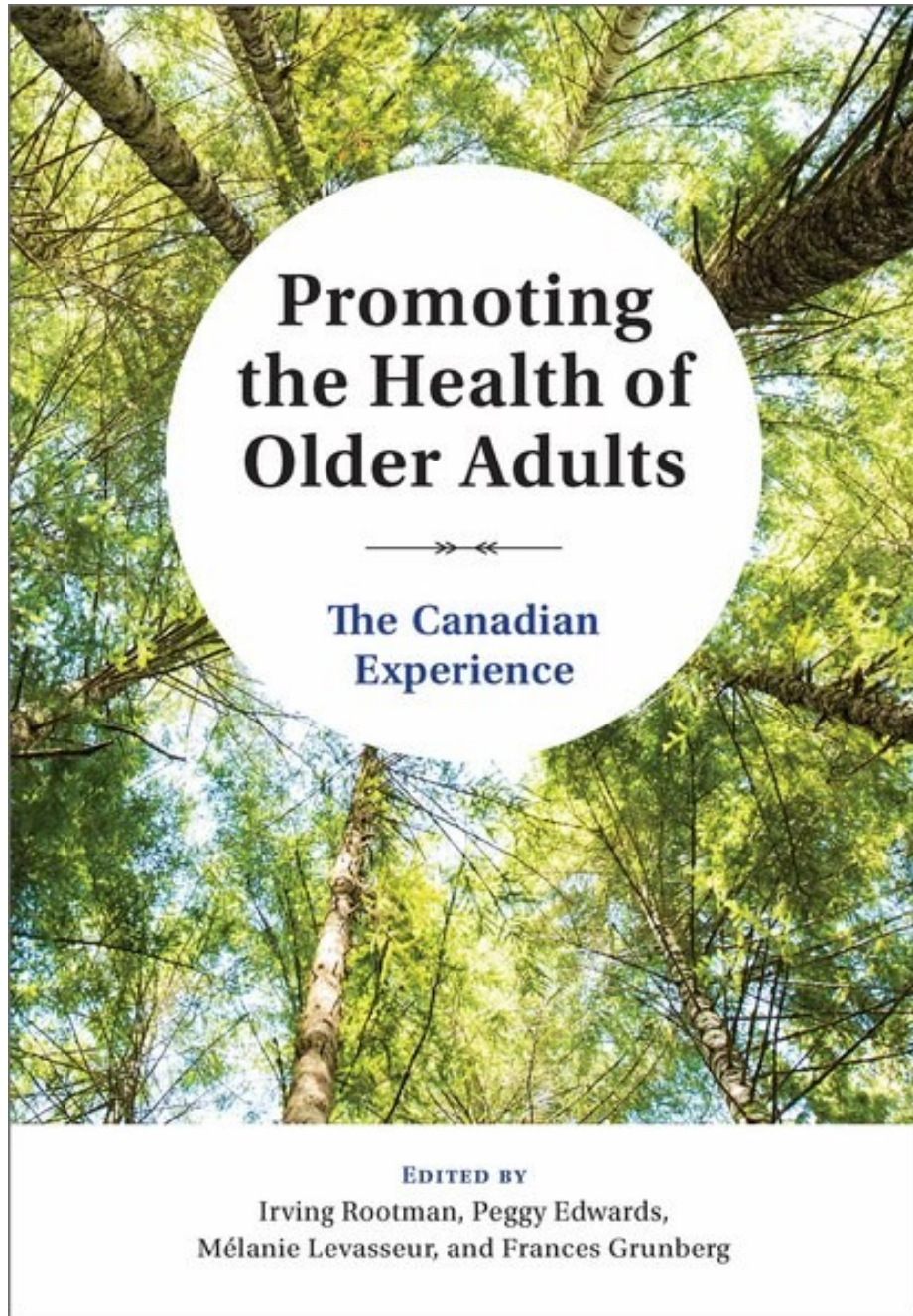
RE-Imagining Healthy Aging: Where to from here?

Peggy Edwards

 Living in the 21 Century:
A Seniors Strategy

September 2021





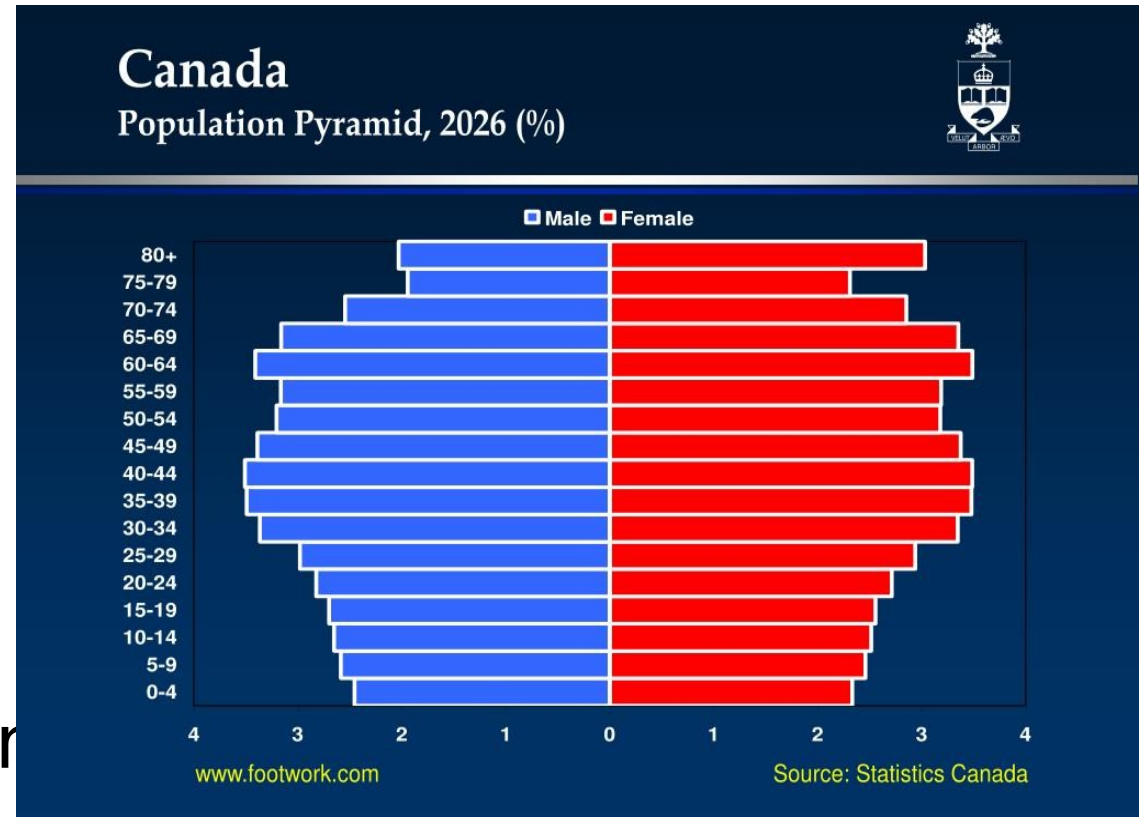
Canadian Scholars,
2021

64 expert and wise
contributors

Demography as Destiny?

- Population aging in Canada
- Longevity
- Diversity
- Diversity within diversity

Shifts in aging require shifts in attitudes, policies, programs and services



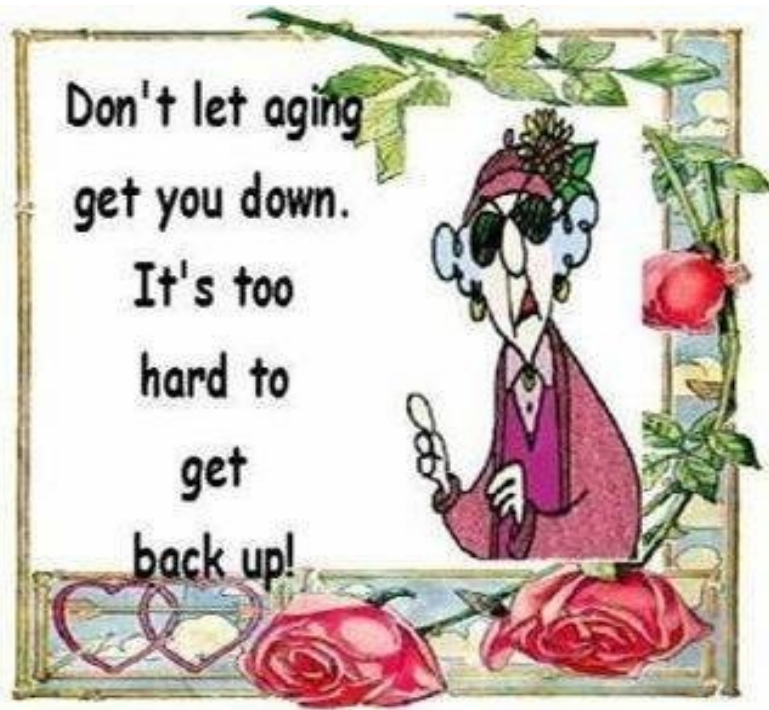
What is Healthy Aging?



“The process of **optimizing opportunities for physical, social and mental health** to enable seniors to take **an active part** in society **without discrimination** and to enjoy **independence** and **quality of life**” (Public Health Agency Canada, 2010)

“The process of developing and maintaining the **functional ability** that enables well-being in older age. Functional ability is about having the capabilities that enable all people **to be and do what they have reason to value**. This includes a person’s ability to: meet their **basic needs**; to **learn, grow and make decisions**; to be **mobile**; to build and maintain **relationships**; and to **contribute** to society” (WHO, 2015)

Changing Narratives



The first senior moment.



The 4Ps for Healthy Aging

Promotion, Prevention, Protection, Person-centred care



Create and Support Age-Friendly Environments

- Age-Friendly Communities (WHO, 2005)
- 4 As: affordable, accessible, appropriate and available
- Age-friendly housing on the continuum of independent living to assisted living to long-term care.
- Aging in community
- High tech/high touch

AGE-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS FOSTER HEALTH AND WELL-BEING AND THE PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE AS THEY AGE. THEY PROMOTE HEALTH AND PROVIDE PEOPLE-CENTERED SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO ENABLE RECOVERY OR TO COMPENSATE FOR THE LOSS OF FUNCTION SO THAT

Key Themes for Promoting the Health of Older Persons

1. Equity, diversity and intersectionality

Health inequalities among older people in Indigenous communities, gender diverse groups, visible minority and immigrant communities, and those living with functional limitations, and a gradient of inequalities by socioeconomic status.

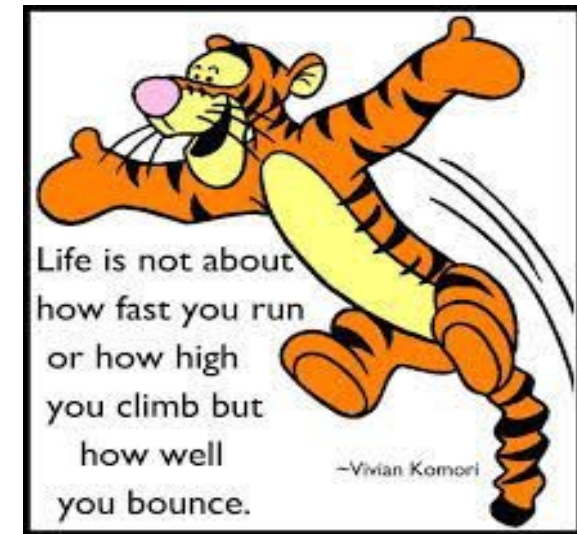
2. Healthy public policies needed at all levels

3. Value of intergenerational solidarity

4. Resilience

5. Human rights-based approach

6. Listening to and working with older people



Key Strategies for Promoting the Health of Older Persons

1. **Healthy public policy:** economic security, intergenerational fairness, support innovation
2. **Supportive environments:** AF communities, housing and transportation; AgeTEch; reducing social isolation; nurturing relationships, preventing mistreatment, affordable options, social support and participation
3. **Strengthen community action:** Promoting health among older people in Indigenous, immigrant, gender diverse and visible minority communities, and those living with functional limitations (accessibility), break down myths, engagement older adults, community development by and for older adults
4. **Support healthy behaviours:** lifelong learning, health and digital literacy, healthy eating, physical activity, creative expression (arts), mental health, cognitive resilience and vitality
5. **Reorient health and social services:** 4 ps; safe drug use; maintain/regain independence and functioning in daily life; change and fix systems: long-term care, mental health, dementia care, end-of life and death, support caregivers (paid and unpaid).

Healthy Aging Reimagined

“Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be, the last of life for which the first was made.” – Robert Browning

How do you imagine your old age to be?

“Through a combination of political will, public support and personal effort, healthy aging with dignity and vitality is within reach of all Canadians.” – *Healthy Aging in Canada*, 2006

**What elements need to be in a strategy
for healthy aging in the 21st century?**

UN Decade of Healthy Aging

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShmemfpkVLQ>

Note the key factors in the vision of healthy aging

Key Factors in a Vision for Healthy Aging

UN Decade Older Persons

- Able to meet everyday basic needs
- Stay mobile and get where you need to go
- Build and maintain relationships
- Continue to learn and make decisions
- Contribute to family and community



TO ACHIEVE THIS

- Supportive environments
- Leave no-one behind
- Act together
- Listen to and include older people