

Healthy Cities

Implementation Science Team Grant

# Reimagining Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) for 21st Century Cities

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May 27, 2024

# Objectives

- Our Vision
- Study Background
- Our Partners
- Study Objectives
- The Ambassador Program
- Barrie sites

# OUR VISION

*Ten years from now*



**Aging in the right place** is having the health and social support and services you need to live safely and independently in your home for as long as you wish and are able

A **Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC)** is a geographical area that has naturally become home to a significant concentration of older adults

## DID YOU KNOW?



*There are >2,000 NORC sites in Ontario alone*

### Health Services



**On-site clinical services, drop-in health and wellness programs, group health clinics**

### Digital Literacy



**Digital literacy, community supports**

### Social Engagement



**Recreational community building, social engagement, mutual support network**

### Healthy Eating



**Access to fresh produce, cooking groups/classes to promote healthy eating**

# Study Background

- Federally funded 6-year study
- Focused on helping older adults age in the right place
- Studying the barriers and facilitators to implementing programs for older adults living in NORCs
- Looking for improvements in health and well-being because of the added supports



**This first-of-its kind project will:**

1

Reimagine aging in place

2

Deliver practical tools

3

Support the successful and equitable spread and scale of this model across Canada and internationally

4

Ultimately benefit older adults including women everywhere

## Two Related Projects Funded

Canadian Institutes  
of Health Research  
(CIHR)

Public Health  
Agency of Canada  
(PHAC)



**Three NORC models** will be implemented  
across sites in **Toronto** and **Barrie**

# Our Partners

- **Barrie Housing**
- **Barrie Public Library**
- **City of Barrie**
- City of Toronto
- Diabetes Action Canada
- ICES
- **NORC Innovation Center (UHN Open Lab)**
- OCAD University
- Public Health Ontario
- Ontario Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care
- Queen's University
- **Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit**
- Toronto Public Health
- Toronto Public Library
- Trillium Health Partners
- University of Toronto
- Wellesley Institute

# CIHR Objectives

Identify features of NORCs

Implement enhanced NORC models

Understand the contextual factors

Examine whether the level of enhancement affects implementation success

Confirm the core functions and adaptable forms of the enhanced NORC model

Develop a NORC Implementation Toolkit

*PHAC Deeply Affordable Housing Equity Extension builds on and increases the impact and scale of our CIHR project*

## PHAC Extension

Spread model in Barrie and Toronto

Spread model to Seniors Housing sites

Determine how to best leverage resources to support social connection, nutrition and physical activity



← Sex and gender-based (SBGA+) analytic approach →

# The Ambassador Program (Intervention)

NIC's Ambassador program takes a relationship-centered, participatory approach to community building which reflected in the following program values:

- **Resident-led:** Inspiring local seniors to lead change in their own communities.
- **Collaborative:** Fostering an open, safe environment to address aging in place goals.
- **Strength-Based:** Appreciating that everyone in the community is valuable and has something to offer.
- **Inclusive:** Honoring the diversity of communities and the voices and cultures that have historically been excluded from decision-making.
- **Accessible:** Accommodating those with language, mobility, hearing and vision impairments, and cognitive issues.





# The Ambassador Program



- The program is an **8–9-month process** where a group of 3-5 tenant Ambassadors learn how to bring their community together and offer programs focused on health and wellness needs identified by the building tenants themselves.
- The **Community Connector** supports the Ambassador group members through this process and provides information on local supports and services they can leverage to start programming in their NORC.
- Barrie Housing sites will also have access to a **Community Librarian** to help connect tenants to library services and programs.

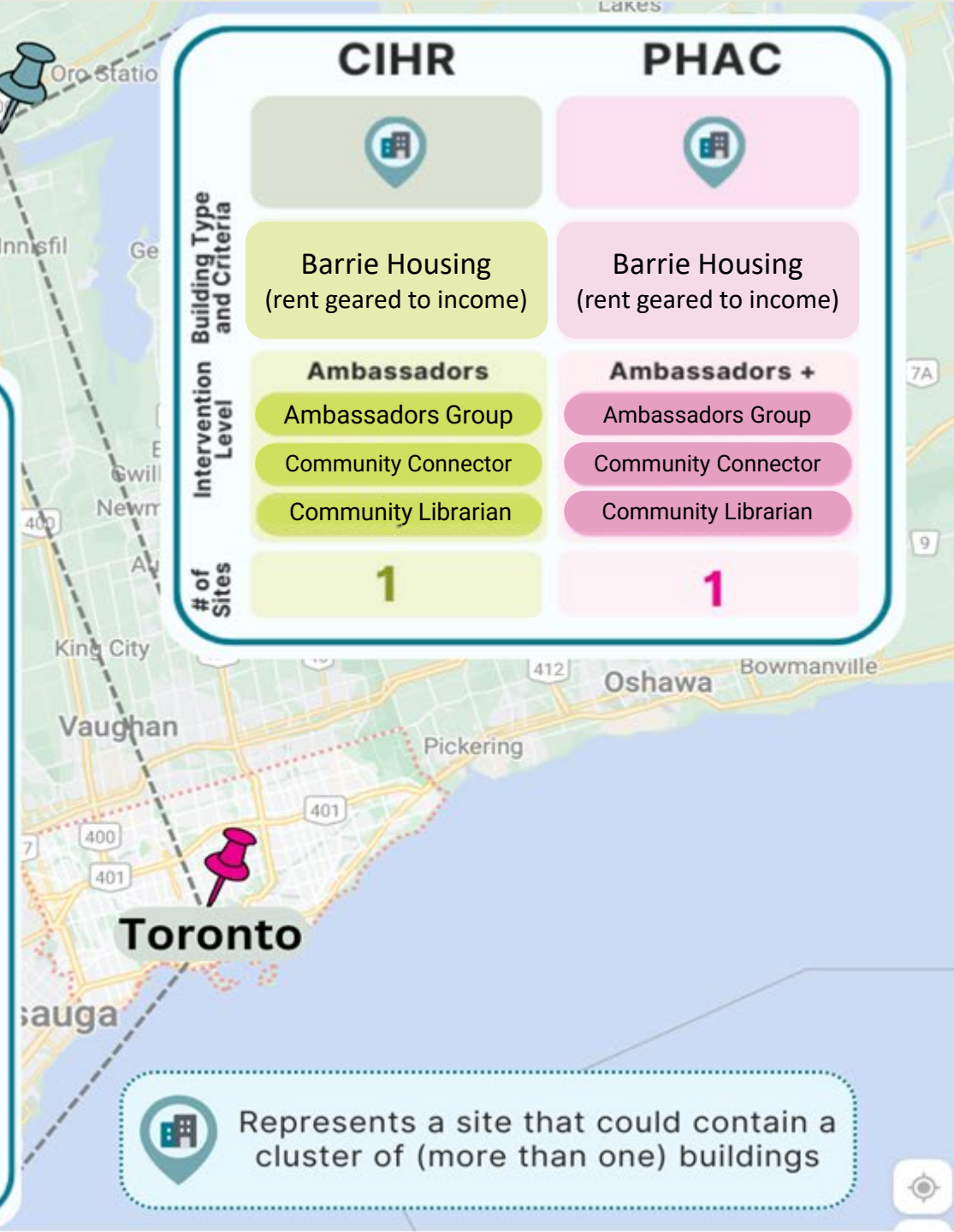




# NORC Study Sites in Toronto and Barrie

	CIHR	PHAC
Building Type and Criteria	 <p>NORC Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs)</p>	 <p>Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation</p>
Intervention Level	<p><b>Ambassadors</b>      <b>Staffed</b>      <b>Premier</b></p> <p>Ambassadors Group</p> <p>Community Connector</p> <p>Get Healthy integrated care team</p> <p>Renovations</p> <p><i>Increasing program intensity</i> →</p>	<p><b>Ambassadors +</b></p> <p>Ambassadors Group</p> <p>Community Connector</p> <p>Community Librarian</p> <p>Get Healthy team</p>
# of Sites	6	2

	CIHR	PHAC
Building Type and Criteria	 <p>Barrie Housing (rent geared to income)</p>	 <p>Barrie Housing (rent geared to income)</p>
Intervention Level	<p><b>Ambassadors</b></p> <p>Ambassadors Group</p> <p>Community Connector</p> <p>Community Librarian</p>	<p><b>Ambassadors +</b></p> <p>Ambassadors Group</p> <p>Community Connector</p> <p>Community Librarian</p>
# of Sites	1	1



# Barrie Building Profiles

Site ID*	Building Type	Number of building units	Building population size (n)	Neighbourhood Subregion	Neighbourhood characteristics (walk score)	% of Older Adults (>65)	Funder
<b>WAL9</b>	Low-rise	27 units	N/A	Downtown	53% walk score 43% transit score	7%	CIHR
<b>WAL9</b>	High-rise	99 units	208	North Barrie	75% walk score 43% transit score	12%	
<b>WAL10</b>	High-rise	125 units	225	North Barrie	70% walk score 46% transit score	23%	PHAC
<b>WAL10</b>	Low -rise	50 units	130	North Barrie	79% for walk score 46% transit score	8%	

\*a site could contain a cluster of (more than one) buildings

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