Embracing Population Change in Northern BC: Health Services as a Foundation for Community Development

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The Changing Landscapes of Northern BC
Population Change in Northern BC


Source: Statistics Canada
Population Change in Northern BC

Source: Statistics Canada

Proportion Aged 65+

[Graph showing the increase in proportion aged 65+ from 1986 to 2006, with a steady rise over the years.]

Source: Statistics Canada
Population Change in the Cariboo Regional District

Proportion Aged 65+

Source: Statistics Canada
Population Change in Northern BC

Proportion of Working Aged Adults Aged 45-64

Source: Statistics Canada
Population Change in the Cariboo Regional District

Proportion of Working Aged Adults Aged 45-64

Source: Statistics Canada
The Community Development Challenge

- Defining community development
  - Range of practices and efforts to support collective action, change and conditions for living
  - Means of transforming the physical and social environment of a geographical area (Chavis and Wandersman 1990)
  - “An incremental process through which individuals, families and communities gain the power, insight and resources to make decisions and take action regarding their well-being.” (Labonte 1996)
The Community Development Challenge

- Challenges to Community Development
  - Fixation on export-oriented resource extraction
  - Expected to solve resource dependency
  - Maintenance of existing service base, level of public funding and attraction of private capital
The Community Development Challenge

The challenge of Community Development

- Pursuit of CD for its own sake
- Getting broad-based “buy-in”
- Integration of CD objectives
- Collaboration with neighbouring communities
Population Aging: Challenges/Opportunities

- Health care
  - Availability of primary health care
  - Adaptations to practice and service delivery
  - Rationing of acute and continuing care beds
  - Access to geriatric specialists
Population Aging: Challenges/Opportunities

- Housing
  - Suitable
  - Affordable
  - Proximity to services and amenities
  - Safe
Population Aging: Challenges/Opportunities

- Community Services
  - Seniors-friendly leisure and recreation
  - Seniors’ activity centre / clubs
  - Public and private transportation

- Infrastructure
  - Sidewalks, walkways
  - Snow and ice removal
Population Aging: Challenges/Opportunities

- Civic and Voluntary Sectors
  - Volunteer-provided services
  - Opportunities for voluntarism
  - Advocacy and voice in civic affairs
Embracing Population Change

- Be informed, not afraid
- Assess needs
- Recognize potential for development
- Network near and far
- Start preparing now, not later
Health Services as a Foundation for Community Development

- A “bridging” issue
- The networked community
- Re-imaging the community landscape
A realistic future?
Maybe more like this ...