



Oasis



2023-2024

Annual Report



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This has been another exciting year for Oasis. Since our last report the Oasis program has expanded from eleven communities to nineteen across Canada, including new sites in three provinces – Ontario, Nova Scotia, and British Columbia. With this expansion came the addition of new Community Developer and Onsite Coordinator team members, along with new partner organizations who support the delivery of on-the-ground Oasis programming. We are so grateful to have a passionate team supporting the Oasis operations across the country.

Oasis membership has now grown to over 945 older adults signed up to participate in the program. In this year alone, there have been upwards of 23,000 participations by individual members to the various Oasis activities.

Throughout the last year, Oasis has also made important progress on key strategic initiatives,

facilitated by BoardWalk Group. Major milestones included the formation of a Transformation Committee which will support the transition of Oasis to its own not-for-profit structure, and the development of the Oasis Playbook to guide future scaling efforts. In September 2024, we hosted our inaugural Oasis Partners Summit, bringing together key partners who support the Oasis program across Canada to help guide our future directions. Details about the Oasis Partners Summit will be included in our next annual report, with additional highlights available on our website and newsletter.

Other exciting updates you can read more about in this report include: a year in review from each of the Oasis sites, the latest on the evaluation of Oasis, and key Oasis presentations, publications, and features in the media. We hope you enjoy this year in review and we look forward to sharing more exciting updates with you in the coming years!

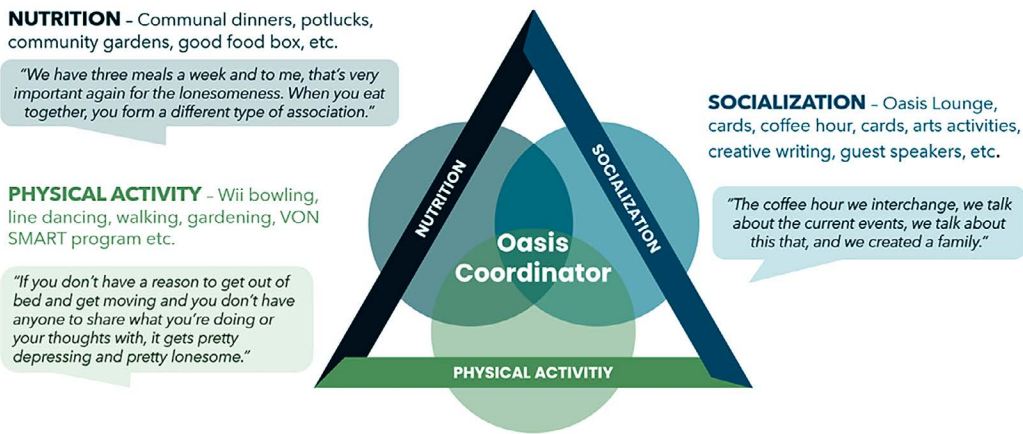


ABOUT OASIS

Oasis is a program which seeks to create inclusive communities to support aging well in place.

Oasis is locally co-designed by its members; activities and programming are developed and implemented based on the local community's interests and needs. Programming is led by members themselves, the Oasis Onsite Coordinators, and/or community partner agencies.

Key features of the Oasis program include:



Supportive partnerships between the public, private and not-for-profit sectors are fundamental to the success of the Oasis program. Our key partners include:



# Thank you for a great year!

We would like to extend a sincere “thank you” to all of the organizations and individuals who have given their time to provide information or program activities to Oasis members across Canada.



## GUEST SPEAKERS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

This year, members have hosted over 90 guest speakers across the program sites. Speakers included various local fire departments, police departments, community-based service organizations, post-secondary schools, Community Health Centres, plus an array of engaging special interest speakers. Speakers shared their valuable knowledge with the members and information about services available in their community. Thank you to all the speakers for your contribution to Oasis programming!



## VOLUNTEERS

Oasis programming has also continued to be supported by amazing volunteers from across the country – including community, student, and resident volunteers across each of the sites. Their contributions to the program help diversify the type and increase the number of activities offered and provide valued opportunities for intergenerational engagement. Thank you to all our volunteers for your contributions to Oasis!

Thank you to our community partners who help make the delivery of Oasis programming and research possible!

OUR PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PARTNERS WHO PROVIDE SPACE FOR PROGRAMMING AND ACTIVITIES:



OUR ACADEMIC PARTNERS WHO SUPPORT THE EVALUATION AND EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAM:



OUR COMMUNITY SITE PARTNERS WHO SUPPORT THE ON-THE-GROUND DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAM:



Our deepest thanks also goes out to ReConnect Health Services for their support of the Toronto Oasis site from 2023-2024.

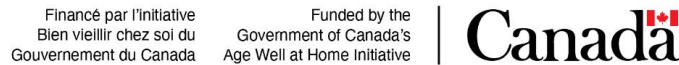
OUR FUNDERS



OASIS EXPANSION UPDATE

Thanks to the Government of Canada's Age Well at Home Initiative, Oasis now operates in six new locations across three provinces. These new communities are located in Vancouver (2), Ottawa (1), Halifax (2), and Thunder Bay (1). In Vancouver, the program has established two sites—New Continental and Roddan Lodge—with activities commencing in July and August 2024 respectively. In Ottawa, the Rosewood site, made significant strides in fostering community engagement such as through partnerships with HEARCANADA and the Ottawa Public Library's Homebound Service. They also recently hosted a successful joint beach day with Ambleside Oasis. Halifax and Dartmouth are home to programs at Belmont Arms and Avonhurst Gardens, featuring a blend of exercise classes, social events, and educational presentations. In Thunder Bay, the Castlegreen site, launched in March 2024, is expanding its reach through community-based activities such as meal delivery, pop-up cafes, and local events.

You can read more about these new Oasis sites (and others!) in the following pages of this report. Our newest sites in Vancouver (2) and Ottawa (1) will be featured in more detail in the next issue of our annual report as they are just getting started!



Strategic Initiatives and Governance

This year, key strategic initiatives included a comprehensive governance overhaul facilitated by BoardWalk Group, the formation of the Transformation Committee, and the development of the Oasis Playbook to guide future scaling efforts. Dr. Catherine Donnelly and Dr. Vincent DePaul are leading the Oasis Project's transition to a National Board structure. Thanks to our funders, Oasis is well-positioned for effective scaling while engaging with key partners to support the long-term sustainability of the program.



# Kingston Site #1



This year, Kingston site #1 (KS1) enjoyed a smoother, more traditional period as gathering restrictions and mask requirements were lifted, allowing members to reconnect more freely. While some effects of the pandemic continue to linger, KS1 has moved forward positively. Facing Canada's housing affordability challenges, which have limited new member opportunities, KS1 responded with unity and inclusivity by inviting residents from a nearby apartment to join in Oasis events—strengthening bonds across both sites.

With a temporary pause in membership expansion due to coordinator Ashley Bates's leave of absence, Providence Care stepped up as a valuable partner,

providing interim support to maintain a vibrant program for members. Marty Elliott, who is known for his engaging spirit and humor, has stepped in three days a week to ensure consistency in programming. His contributions, like recreating the excitement of a Blue Jays game for members to enjoy virtually, have been well-received and uplifting for all.

The KS1 Board also made strides to strengthen member connections by shifting to more relaxed and enjoyable gatherings in place of formal board meetings. Seasonal lunches and holiday gatherings have offered a welcoming space for Directors and members to connect and gather member insights on Oasis activities and preferences.

The KS1 Board remains dedicated to a sustainable future for the site. In collaboration with Queen's University's team, led by Professors Catherine Donnelly and Vince DePaul, KS1 continues to work on long-term development strategies for Oasis programs nationwide. Local Advisory Committee members also offer invaluable guidance on how best to support the impact of KS1 within this growing national initiative.

The Board extends heartfelt thanks to Ben Gooch of Providence Care, and Elaine Watier, Oasis Member Representative, for their unwavering support and dedication. Above all, KS1 is grateful to its members, whose continued engagement and sense of community embody the Oasis vision.



# Kingston Site #2



## AND JUST LIKE THAT, ANOTHER YEAR OF OASIS AT KINGSTON SITE #2 (KS2) HAS FLOWN BY!

When asked what they wanted to share about our site, the members decided to focus on the programming that helps make us unique!

In partnership with a local training facility, we have a therapy dog team who visits the site on a monthly basis. For those who aren't able to have pets, this is a true highlight! We have some beautiful, honorary four-legged Oasis members as a result and look forwards to good conversation with their humans they bring along with them!

Over the last year, we transitioned our monthly 'Community Cooking' (cooking a meal to then be shared) to meal prep for one! Once a month, interested members come together and prepare three meals, which can be refrigerated or frozen until they are ready to be eaten. It is so true that many hands make light work, and since our site isn't equipped with a kitchen, all meals are made in the instant pot or air fryer.

Jenny, from Canadian Hearing Services continues to offer a free hearing clinic on-site for members and beyond! Jenny is able to check for wax, check and clean hearing aids, conduct hearing exams, and create individualized plans, all from the comfort of our Oasis space.

Although this past year had many highlights, none come close to the fun we had with our summer students Laura & Adriana! These ladies brought so much joy and so many laughs to the group. Members were also able to participate in 'Columbia Days', where Adriana and Laura graciously shared about their home and culture through food, crafts, and dance.

Of course, programming also included weekly euchre and Rummikub, exercise & walking groups, bingo, shared dinners, and member-led crafts and live music! We are so excited to see what this next year brings, as we continue to build a positive and caring community here at Oasis!



ON THE LEFT

## In loving memory of one of Oasis' brightest lights.

S, one of the 'original' Oasis members, had such a positive impact on everyone she interacted with. Her laugh was infectious, her smile welcoming, and she always knew how to give the best compliments.

Her exuberant and caring personality has left a legacy with our group, and her presence with us is truly missed.



# Kingston Site #3



and personalize the game to make it reflect and represent the KS3 group!

This past year at KS3 has also been all about flexibility and adaptability. With the regular Program Coordinator on leave, the group at KS3 opened their space to Oasis office staff, summer students, and an interim site coordinator- all of whom were welcomed with open arms. Together they shared laughs over new games, had meaningful conversation, and were reminded that the members themselves are what make Oasis thrive!

**ANOTHER GREAT YEAR IS IN THE BOOKS FOR THE MEMBERS AT KINGSTON SITE 3 (KS3).** This year, the members opened their doors to welcome folks from another nearby building to programming- which was a big success. Not only has this led to new relationships within Oasis but has also renewed a sense of community outside of programming. The goal moving forward is to split programming time between the two sites; allowing reduced barriers and increased participation at each building, with all members invited to attend at both sites.

Several guest speakers generously shared their expertise, with highlights including a multi-session workshop on chronic conditions, the Kingston Police Fraud Unit,

and a self-management seminar on Making the Most of Your Healthcare Appointments- which included practical strategies for self-advocacy across all health disciplines.

Food programming continued to be a highlight, with members participating in potlucks, a BBQ, and working together monthly to cook and share meals together. It's true that many hands make light work, and members had many opportunities to try lots of new, cost effective, healthy meals that they could replicate at home.

To end off summer programming, the KS3 Oasis site was presented with a new cornhole game, built by the local Men's Shed group. In the coming months members will be able to collaborate to decorate



# Kingston Site #4



**THIS PAST YEAR SAW MANY CHANGES FOR THE KINGSTON SITE #4 (KS4) OASIS PROGRAM.** We began the year by saying goodbye to our wonderful Mitacs students, Laura and Adrianna who shared their beloved home of Colombia with the members at various Cultural Days over the summer. The members then went on to host a baby shower with the local Kingston sites for project manager Simone and baby Miles. Not only did we gain our youngest member of Oasis this year, but we also gained a number of new members from the building. These new members have brought with them new friendships that have been formed over the past year, and as coordinator, it has been such a welcome sight to see these new friendships flourish.

October called for the 2nd Annual Orange and Black party, followed by a holiday Potluck in December. February had a Valentine's Day party and April, a flamingo themed party. When not partying, the members still kept their creative minds going with a number of new art projects this year.

We welcomed Queen's Elder Law, the Kingston Police Department, among other community presenters to speak with the members. This year we also revamped programming with the return of Bingo to the building as well as Community Meals which Program Coordinator Kathryn prepares for the members each month. It has been another wonderful year of Oasis, and we're all looking forward to the next one!



Belleville



THIS PAST YEAR BELLEVILLE OASIS SITE (BOS) WELCOMED A NEW COORDINATOR, TIFFANY, WITH OPEN ARMS AND HEARTS IN NOVEMBER.

The members were eager to get some of their new Oasis ideas flowing and Tiffany was happy to make them happen! We started by making an Oasis Flyer and sending it through neighborhood mail to all the homes in the area. This was a huge success to let everyone know Oasis was up and running again as well as informing the community that they could be an Oasis Member just by living here. This flyer along with our monthly printed calendars becoming available at the community mailboxes has brought many new faces through the door and increased member participation in daily activities!

Oasis members embraced new learning experiences by listening to knowledgeable guest speakers! Over the last few months, we've had presentations by The Alzheimer Society, Canadian Hearing Society, Vision Loss Rehabilitation, End of Life Doula, Hospice, Paramed, Mental Health Counsellor, Authors and OPP Fraud awareness. Many of these connections were built by networking at a caregiver expo held within our community!

Our Christmas holiday party seemed to capture the hearts of some of our male members as they seemed quite engaged at our nerf gun reindeer game! Other social activities that have been a huge success are Coffee & Chat, BINGO, Drop-In-Darts, Minute-It-To-Win-It Games, Painting



Tutorials, Oasis T-shirt Design Days as well as Mandala Rock Design and Scratch Art that were both ran separately by two talented Oasis Members! Exercise was re-introduced by popular request and members have been dedicated to the virtual programming twice a week as well as continue to tear up the dance floor with their incredible line dancing skills. Nutrition programs have been the way to our member's hearts! Our attendance for Potluck Lunches, High Tea's, Spaghetti Lunch, Valentine's Day Breakfast, Mother's Day Breakfast and Father's Day Breakfast have brought anywhere from 40-50+ people! Community Kitchen had a record high attendance in the last few months, welcoming some new people each week. Our new Movie & Munch program, where members can bring their own lunch or enjoy pizza provided by Oasis while watching a movie on the big screen has seemed to be thoroughly enjoyed!

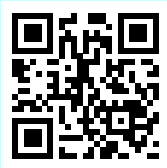
Oasis Belleville had a year of inspiring new connections, growth individually as well as a community and most of all created some everlasting memories for each of our members. We can't wait to see what the next year has in store for our community and are so grateful for the grants and donors that make Oasis possible. Without you there would be no Oasis Families, so thank you wholeheartedly for all that you do!

Toronto



Check out the Toronto Oasis' new website at:

[healthyagingov.ca](https://healthyagingov.ca)



Look for our film "A Place Where We Belong: Stories from OV Oasis for Healthy Aging."

IN OUR OWN WORDS . . .

When I am here, I feel like I am at home. This place means the world to me. This is our home away from home.

We have great community partners, like Nia Centre for the Arts, the Verity Centre, Baycrest Health Sciences, Reena, Unison Health & Community Services, For Youth Initiative, Learning Enrichment Foundation, and the TDSB school space we share.

We are the new kids on the block (since December 2023). We have fun. There is good company and companionship. Comfort. Friendship. Leadership. Happiness. No Hierarchy.

We watch movies, do exercises, play games, hang out, listen to

music ('Raspberry Jam'). We ask local politicians tough questions about affordable housing and community safety. We take advice from 13 Division, the local police station.

We have won a City of Toronto award for community safety.

We share our experiences and accomplishments. There is freedom of participation. We learn, we laugh, and we break bread together. We freely express our individuality. We have become a kind of family. There is a real sense of community.

We work collaboratively, and everybody is welcome. There is collective decision-making. This is a democratic space.

You are missed if you are not here. You are included, and not left out. There is mutual respect for everyone. You are always welcome and people remember your name. We have fun when we get together as a community. This is a place to belong.

We go together to places and events in the local community. We get to know each other by having an idea, planning something, and then doing it together. We do intergenerational gardening. We learn how to use cell phones and computers, and how to use the internet safely.

This is a place where I come alive. We truly live up to our name Oasis, an Oasis from isolation. We embrace the wisdom of our Elders.

# Hamilton



**“HELPFUL, HEALTHY, ENJOYABLE, INFORMATIVE, INTERESTING, COLLABORATIVE, ENRICHING, ENCOURAGING, OPTIMISTIC, INCLUSIVE, KIND, FRIENDLY, INTERACTIVE”- THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE WORDS WE WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE OUR PAST YEAR HERE AT OASIS IN HAMILTON!** We have continued offering activities that everyone loves and introduced new things along the way too. We have seen our program flourish with new members and friendships!

Many enjoy our regular exercise classes twice a week, including chair yoga and Pilates, aerobics and strength circuits, and exercises for balance and flexibility. We participate in dance fitness,

Ageless Grace chair exercise, and Zumba once per month and have explored new ways to get physical activity, like Hawaiian dancing, line dancing, and bocce ball!

We have learned a lot about nutrition and maintaining a healthy lifestyle through visits from dietitians and by watching interesting documentaries. Some of the other very informative presentations we have had this year include visits from the Hamilton Police on protecting ourselves against scams and fraud, Home and Community Care Support Services about the services they offer, and a series by the Canadian Mental Health Association to learn more about taking care of ourselves and our mental health.

We’ve played many games of Bingo and trivia, created fun crafts, enjoyed relaxing massage clinics, and shared lots of delicious meals together, including some favourites like cabbage roll & pierogi dinners, quarter chicken dinners, and BBQs. We even had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to watch the total solar eclipse together! We can’t wait to see what the next year holds and look forward to making many more memories!



# London



**ANOTHER TERRIFIC YEAR HAS GONE BY WITH THE LONDON OASIS PROGRAM!** This past year has fostered new friendships, ignited fresh interests, and created greater connections with our members and our London community partners. As one member shared “Oasis, is outstanding for friendship, crafts, and enjoying time outside of our regular routine!”

We have been busy this past year with activities, programs, and our monthly community meals to

celebrate the seasons. In February, the members created over fifty valentines which were then mailed to veterans living in Long Term Care homes across Canada to thank them for their service through the “Valentines for Vets” program. We held a Valentines Tea and Luncheon, Thanksgiving dinner, festive dinner, open house, pizza lunches and a High Tea where members crafted and fashioned floral fascinators to celebrate the event! At our “Evening of Music and Stars” dinner, we were gifted with

the voice and talents of a Western University music graduate. She also joined us at our festive dinner to lead a member sing-along. At each of these events, members created festive décor in advance to celebrate the seasons!

London Oasis members were eager to learn and share new skills. One of our members shared, “Oasis, thank you for this program. It is a great source to have the opportunity to get together with friends, to share our gifts and talents, connect with each other,

to laugh, do crafts and so much more. Thank you again.” A few of our art and craft activities this past year included pumpkin floral arrangements, stocking making, jewelry design, origami, drawing, flamingo centerpieces, painting and winter and Easter door hangings.

Led by a continual interest to learn and grow, London members created a new “Learn to Draw” program which has been quite popular. Drawing flowers, mountain scenes and birds has become a regular activity among members. As a result of this member-initiated program, we will be holding our first London Oasis Art Show in September, which will highlight the many talents of our members, including the sketches done through this program.

Regular programming like Bingo, weekly trivia, brain games, cards and games and coffee hour continued throughout the year as well. An exciting development this past year was the creation of London’s first Chair Fitness Exercise program video for our members to use in programming as well as at home.

The London program benefited from the expertise of two Occupational Therapy student placements this past year. Members learned through a series of weekly workshops about fall prevention, internet safety, mental health education, hand function, technology navigation, meal preparation and nutrition, and strategies to maintain your mind and body as we age. Our OT students created a series of informational pamphlets and resources for our members related to the above topics. As one member stated, “Many, many thanks for the Oasis program here at Homestead. I have learned many educational items of information for seniors.”



Community capacity building continues with the help of our London Community Developer and our connection to our London community partners! This past year, we have hosted multiple workshops and information sessions within the Oasis program. The Alzheimer Society of Southwest Partners offered multiple workshops related to brain health and creating a dementia friendly environment. The Canadian National Institute for the Blind presented a workshop related to age related vision loss, and members learned about continued education opportunities through the organization, Seniors Learning in Retirement. Additionally, the London Public Library

presented a workshop on Digital Literacy and Western University’s Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion presented a workshop related to how to create a safe and welcoming community environment. Lastly, the City of London presented an information session related to traffic calming options for the community. The community developer was instrumental in identifying sidewalks in the area that may need improvements.

With 2023 behind us, the London Oasis program looks forward to another year of connection, growth, friendship, and learning!

St. Thomas



OASIS ST. THOMAS’S, NEW EXPANSION SITE IS NOW IN FULL SWING OF ACTIVITIES.

Collaboration and flourishing friendships are easily observed here if you ever happen to visit us!

We have introduced “Knowledge Breaks” to our group. Our Knowledge Breaks Program features individuals or groups of special or expert knowledge of diverse topics of interest. Speakers have joined us and provided education and learning opportunities on Self Defense, Community Programs for Seniors, Fire Prevention, Nutrition for Heart and Diabetes Health, and Understanding Alzheimer’s and Dementia Related Disease and Dementia Friendly Communities. In the future we look forward to information about Fraud and Scams and Understanding Power of Attorney and Power of Care/ Consent and Capacity. We have managed to secure a self-defense session monthly as a result of

our Knowledge Breaks and have fostered positive community partnerships within this program.

Every Friday is SOUP-er! The implementation of a soup day for socialization and nutrition principles has been a favourite activity to attend by Oasis members. A different soup is offered on Fridays and members enjoy this time away from meal preparation and meeting up with others within the building. In February we celebrated the Chinese New Year with Wonton soup and plan to implement more cultural themes in the future.

A multi-purpose activity afternoon is available with not just one, but a variety of activities offered and available to meet member interests, strengths, and ability to try new things and discover new talents within oneself. Painting, crafts, Wii games, board and card games are all offered with a means to promote choice. Plans in the future for canning and jamming activities

are in the works. We enjoyed evening programs after 6:00 p.m. of bingo, entertainment, and potluck dinners.

Valuing member input, our monthly meetings engage members to have a voice in their programming needs and interests. There has been adoption of a formal Motion process at Oasis Member meetings for actions of approval by their collective voice. A motion is the formal process for Members to suggest a specific action, or decision that they believe Oasis members should consider and provides direction to the coordinator, with majority support. Following discussion and debate and if agreed, an Oasis member will pass the motion and another member will second the motion officially with their signatures.

Community partnerships are important to sustain vibrant programs. Oasis St. Thomas has developed relations and partnerships with Skyline, The City of St. Thomas-Fire Department, Central Community Health Centre, Alzheimer Society Southwest Partners, and Southwest Public Health. With plans to combine additional community resources to our relationships, it is exciting to envision our Oasis Program’s future growth in a short time.

Oasis Membership has increased and continues to do so month by month, as we strengthen and sustain healthy communities of our older adults and people living with disabilities. St. Thomas Oasis has successfully addressed important determinants of healthy aging such as isolation, nutrition, physical fitness, and sense of purpose in a short time with continual growth through support from site Oasis Members assisting with these programs.

We are on a successful pathway with programs continuously improving and changing to meet the needs of our members. We look forward to the next chapter for St. Thomas Oasis!

# Thunder Bay



**Weaving  
Together Fabrics  
of Aging Well**

**AT ROOTS COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE'S AGM, TO SHOWCASE THE OASIS PROGRAM, WE INVITED THE PUBLIC TO CHOOSE THEIR TOP FOCUS TO AGE WELL AT HOME.** We offered the same opportunity to our Oasis members at the two Thunder Bay sites. The resulting tapestry featured a surprisingly even distribution of priorities: nutrition (purple), fitness (yellow), socializing (peach), community supports (blue) and other (green).

Here are some of the ways that Oasis at the two Thunder Bay sites have supported these essential pillars.

**Nutrition**  
Our food programming offers information, inspiration, and



community while also helping stretch the food budget too. At Thunder Bay Site #1 (TB1), in our second year, we're having fun with healthy and dignified food access. We've enjoyed cooking classes, snack + learns, appie hours, make + takes, tea times, picnics, Seniors + Elders Meals with the Community Food Market, nutrition guest speakers, a community herb garden, and our new veggie garden beds.

At Thunder Bay's new site (TB2) as of March 2024, we've initiated a few food programs. "Cook & Taste" invites members to gather around and cook together - vegetarian and gluten-free Beet Lasagna, Fish Tacos with local garden ingredients, and Chicken Pot Pies. Through "Neighbourhood Roving"

we bring locally baked goods such as Bannock, Portuguese tarts, croissants, and healthy cookies into the neighbourhood.

**Fitness**  
Staying physically active a little each day is a top priority among members. At TB1, we've loved our volunteer and student yoga and fitness instructors. We also keep moving with neighbourhood and indoor walks at Lakehead University, urban poling, hikes at local attractions, lawn games and regular YouTube fitness.

TB2 has offered regular walks in the nearby creek pathways, as well as Chair Yoga. The chair yoga is presented both with a live teacher and on YouTube.

**Socializing**  
To successfully age in place, one truly is aging in community. At TB1, "Oasis has helped give our building a neighbourhood feeling". We're a social bunch and have enjoyed getting to know each other through cards and games, darts, puzzle making, book club, arts + crafts, birthday and holiday celebrations and informal connections in between.

At TB2, we've created a welcoming "office" space with comfortable chairs, tea and coffee on the go, along with ready conversation. Our socialization programs run the gamut from social bingo, games and cards, crafts, sewing, watercolour painting, and a favourite—singalong with local musician Rodney Brown.

**Community Supports**  
Building community extends outside of our NORCs too. TB1 welcomes community guests who share their services and expertise with us through presentations and fireside chats. We also tap into community referrals and resources, try other community organizations' initiatives in our space, and head out into the community for special outings and activities.

TB2 has connected to a variety of community supports through presentations, workshops, and resource sharing. These include Age BIG Thunder Bay, Jumbles Theatre Community Arts, SJCG's North West Regional Palliative Care Program, and Age Friendly Thunder Bay.



**Other**  
The whole of Oasis is greater than the sum of its parts. Both sites have found tremendous value in the scheduled activities, but perhaps the real magic happens thanks to the positive, safe and exciting container that is Oasis. We have especially enjoyed the strengths and opportunities that have arisen thanks to having two Oasis sites in Thunder Bay. We look forward to continuing to weave colour into the lives of all those involved in the one-of-a-kind tapestry that is Oasis.



Ottawa

WHAT'S UP IN OTTAWA!  
Ottawa Oasis has been hard at work expanding the program. We now operate two sites in Ottawa. Here's what we've been up to:



Ottawa Site #1 (OS1)

Over the past year, there have been many incredible strides led by dedicated members of our Oasis community at OS1. In addition to many fun activities like cooking demos, art workshops, holiday celebrations, and more, OS1 has created truly exceptional health and education opportunities with trusted community partners.

As a result of the collaboration between the Ottawa Paramedic Service, Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre, and Rexall Lincoln Fields, this Oasis community now hosts once-monthly Wellness Clinics. This allows residents to access healthcare and system navigation services. It is especially helpful for individuals with mobility issues, limited transportation options, and for those without access to healthcare practitioners.

Over the past year, we have also connected with HearCANADA for monthly hearing clinics, Chartered Professional Accountants for financial literacy education, a range of local community organizations, and most importantly: one another.



Ottawa Site #2 (OS2)

In partnership with the Olde Forge, we are excited to support the development of Ottawa's newest Oasis Program, OS2. Our outlook is rosy for this program, and we have every reason to be optimistic!

We are now fully operational in this new location and are hosting activities, connecting with community resources, strengthening ties within the community, and developing new opportunities. We look forward to keeping Ottawa Oasis members connected within their own communities, across programs, and to essential services in Ottawa at large.

**An Oasis of Our Own**  
We are so excited and inspired by the incredible things that the Ottawa Oasis community has accomplished. Paramount among these accomplishments are the enduring connections, friendships, and shared experiences facilitated by the development of the Oasis community. We look toward Oasis's continued development and expansion and are motivated to make Oasis a trailblazer within the nation's capital.

Halifax and Dartmouth



CEUD MÌLE FÀILTE (100 THOUSAND WELCOMES)

A part of the expansion, Oasis was welcomed in two buildings in Nova Scotia in April 2024. Spencer House Seniors Centre now manages two new sites: Halifax site and Dartmouth site. We hit the ground running with Kathryn, Queen's University Community Developer arriving on April 2nd to show us the ropes and meeting the new members in both buildings. Using the ideas shared during the pre-opening sessions and initial meeting with members, we formulated plans for programming both in the immediate and distant future.

April was spent just finding our footing. We piloted online chair yoga and Pilates classes, hosted a cooking-for-one food demo, and explored the surrounding neighbourhood during group walks. Erin (Community Developer) and Deb (Site Coordinator) held a budget information session with the members from each building to provide information on how our funding works and what we have allocated to spend on programming and it was followed

by an opportunity for members to provide feedback on how our first month went.

In May, we welcomed presentations from Seniors Safety Net on Frauds and Scams, added chair exercise classes as a regular feature, and gathered frequently for coffee and chats. Members enjoyed teaching and learning new card and board games, discovering who held the luck in their first games. The highlight of May was our "Teas." At the Dartmouth site, we hosted a "Not Mother's Day" Tea, and at the Halifax site, a Victoria Day Tea with finger sandwiches, scones with cream and jam, and assorted sweets. Halifax even got a bit fancy, with a resident suggesting everyone bring their own bone China cups and saucers, making for a charming table setting.

June brought presentations from the Alzheimer Society, another session from Seniors Safety Net, and a talk from Happy at Home. Dartmouth welcomed Atlantic Tours to discuss travel around our beautiful province and beyond. Deb hosted a Gentleman's Afternoon at the Dartmouth site to better

understand how to engage more men in programming, leading to a dedicated afternoon where the fellas gathered for cards, chess, board games, or simply to chat. Both sites formed book clubs, completed their first books, and enjoyed lively discussions, which we're excited to continue.

At the Halifax site, a member led a craft session and taught us to make origami boxes. She believes Deb can carry the lesson forward, though she admits crafting might not be her strong suit! Exercise has also been a favourite; while we may not always be graceful, the laughter certainly raises our heart rates.

Settling in has been wonderful, and the members and building staff have been welcoming and gracious, offering helpful suggestions for keeping future programming exciting. Deb is looking forward to creating fun and enriching calendars in the months to come.

"Mom is having a great time attending Oasis programming. I called her one morning and she said, "Can't talk now, I have to go to Pilates!" – Daughter of Oasis member



Vancouver



Program Recap for Vancouver Site #1 (VS1):

**THIS PAST YEAR AT VS1 HAS BEEN FULL OF LIVELY ACTIVITIES, STRONGER COMMUNITY BONDS, AND SOME POSITIVE CHANGES!**

Oasis Room Makeover: The amenity room underwent a transformation this year, evolving into a cozy haven for our members. We revamped the space by adding a reading corner, a home gym featuring an indoor exercise bike, dumbbells, hand grip strengtheners, and resistance bands. Additionally, we adorned the walls with artworks created by our members, as well as decorative wall stickers and posters. These enhancements have created a comfortable environment for relaxation, social gatherings, and fitness activities.

**Highlight Activities:** Throughout the year, members at VS1 have enjoyed a wide variety of engaging activities. From coffee socials and movie nights to chair yoga and weight training sessions, our community has been bustling with fun and fitness. Board game nights foster friendly competition, while monthly shuttle trips explore local attractions, and baking sessions and potluck parties satisfy our culinary cravings, all building community spirit.

We've also had the pleasure of hosting vegan cooking classes led by a talented summer student from UBC, promoting healthy eating options. Additionally, our English and Cantonese fall prevention clinics, hosted respectively by South Vancouver Neighbourhood House and RISE Community Health Centre in collaboration with Collingwood Neighbourhood House, have underscored our commitment to promoting safety and wellness within our community.

Additionally, members had the unique opportunity to participate in the Housing Central Conference. During the conference, our esteemed members Mark and Norm shared their stories and experiences with Oasis on stage, highlighting the impact of our community programs. Program coordinator Jasmine also took the stage, sharing insights into what makes Oasis special through member interviews and a captivating photo slideshow. These activities have not only enriched our members' lives but also strengthened our community bonds.

**Member Reflections:** Some members have shared, "I didn't know my neighbours' stories before. We exchanged greetings and moved on. Now, we gather almost every night to play board games, chat about everything, share laughter, and truly care for each other." Another member expressed gratitude, saying, "I love shuttle trips! Thank you for taking me to new places. Shout out to Jasmine, driver Joe, CNH shuttle, and Oasis. I can't wait for our next trip!"

**Looking Forward:** We are excited to build on our successes and create even stronger bonds within our vibrant community at VS1. Also, we warmly welcome the new Oasis sites in Vancouver, and we look forward to collaborating and celebrating together with joint parties and events.



Program Recap for Vancouver Site #2 (VS2)

**THE PAST YEAR AT VS2 HAS BEEN FILLED WITH EXCITING ACTIVITIES, STRONG COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, AND SOME NOTEWORTHY CHANGES.**

**Staff Updates:** In December 2023, we welcomed Bowie, our new on-call program assistant fluent in Cantonese, Mandarin, and English. Bowie has already proven to be an incredible asset to our team, supporting program coordinator Jasmine and connecting seamlessly with all members of our diverse community.

**Oasis Room Makeover:** This year, we successfully transformed the room on the ground floor into a cozier space for our members.

The makeover includes removing unused furniture and equipment to make space for a dedicated books corner and games area, providing a comfortable environment for relaxation and socializing. Meanwhile, the 10th-floor kitchen remains an amazing place for potluck lunches and cooking events.

**Highlight Activities:** Throughout the year, members at VS2 have enjoyed a diverse range of activities including coffee socials, bingo, chair yoga, shuttle trips, diamond art workshops, master chef cooking classes, and painting lessons by a summer student from UBC.

We also collaborated with UBC's Active Aging Research Team for the Choose to Move program. Over 8 weeks, we developed healthy habits and culminated in making our own essential oil roller in the final session. Additionally, our collaboration with Collingwood



Neighbourhood House for community lunch, frozen meals and groceries delivery service has been beneficial for our members. These collaborations have been enriching and empowering for our community members.

**Member Reflections:** One of our cherished members, who is 101 years old, shared:

"I used to love arts and crafts, but I lost the passion as I got older. I feel useless with my shaking hands and poor eyesight. When I can complete a diamond art project by myself, I feel so happy! Thank you, everyone!"

**Looking Ahead:** As we continue to grow and welcome new members, we look forward to expanding our activities and fostering even stronger community bonds at VS2 and in Vancouver alongside other Oasis sites.

# Member Reflections

OASIS HAIKU BY A MEMBER

Welcoming others  
Lives crowned  
with dignity  
We are connected

## THUNDER BAY SITE #1

“My experiences at Oasis have been informative, tasty, and fun-filled. I know that I am always welcome at Oasis.”

“Oasis has really helped me to adjust to living here and alone at a very trying time in my life, and for that I say, ‘Thank You!’”

“When one reaches their 70s, 80s, or 90s, a person’s energy for new ventures starts to lessen. We need the energy and enthusiasm of younger folk to lead us into new activities. We need the socialization with others to round out our lives.”

## THUNDER BAY SITE #2

“I experience social anxiety. Today was the first day I felt I could come out to one of the Oasis sessions. It’s so relaxed here and easygoing. Not what I expected. It’s been fun!”

“Since my husband passed away two years ago, I don’t leave my house all winter. It’s been so nice to be with other people. Just to enjoy each other and realize we’re not alone.”



## OTTAWA SITE #1 LONDON SITE

“The Oasis project has triggered a resurgence of OS1 resident engagement in our community. The project’s emphasis on socialization, nutrition, and fitness are spot on.”

“The Oasis project and the health services project made possible by increased resident engagement have already been successful beyond our expectations. There’s still lots to do, but with Oasis support, OS1 residents are up to the task.”



“What I love about Oasis is meeting on a regular basis so that after meeting new neighbours, we really get to know each other and share our lives together.”

“Oasis Program is wonderful for meeting new people and becoming friends – getting out of the house, taking away loneliness.”

“The exercise and fitness programs have helped me both physically and mentally. Getting me out of my apartment and being with others.”

“I believe the most important thing is improving my mental health. I have made so many new friends, learned so much, and became very active.”



Oasis

# Research and Knowledge Mobilization Updates

## Ongoing Research Activities

This year, through our study 'Fostering Healthy Aging in NORCs: A Mixed Methods Explanatory Case Study,' funded by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research, we gained valuable insights from participants via demographic, wellness, and physical assessments. These findings continue to inform our efforts to support older adults in Oasis communities. Christina Luzius-Vanin has been leading the data collection, with tremendous support from a dedicated team of student volunteers and staff. The study is expected to conclude by December 2025.

## Expansion Program Evaluation

In May 2024, a survey was developed to evaluate the impact of Oasis programming across all 12 expansion sites in Canada. The evaluation focused on member experiences, well-being, and demographic profiles, providing a foundation for assessing health outcomes and refining sustainability strategies. We received 211 completed questionnaires from all sites. This evaluation is intended to become an annual process, using a consistent set of questions each year to track progress and inform future program adaptations, ensuring the continued growth and success of Oasis to enhance both social and physical well-being in the community.



## PRESENTATIONS HIGHLIGHTS

This May 10, 2024 virtual event, led by Compassionate Ottawa volunteer Mary Lou Kelley, featured a discussion with Sue Garvey and Vince DePaul about the expanding Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) movement. They highlighted one of Ottawa's Oasis Programs. Initially co-designed in Kingston, the Oasis program has spread across Canada. Vince is the co-Principal Investigator of the Oasis Project, while Sue contributes as a dedicated volunteer in Ottawa's Oasis.

At the 2023 CAG conference in Toronto, the team presented two posters related to

Oasis Senior Supportive Living (Oasis). The first poster, presented by Kathryn McCartney from Queen's University and Jessica Ramlakhan from BoardWalk Group, focused on Oasis's future growth. Oasis helps older adults by offering social activities, meals, and exercise programs in communities where many seniors live. Since starting in Kingston, Ontario, Oasis has expanded to 12 locations across Canada. To ensure its long-term success, Oasis is developing a plan for its management, structure, and growth as a national not-for-profit using a co-design approach.

# OASIS-RELATED PRESENTATIONS

1. Garvey, S., DePaul, V., & Kelley, M. L. (2024, May 9). Exploring Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) [Webinar]. Compassionate Ottawa. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZlunxGHx\\_3Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZlunxGHx_3Y)

2. Donnelly, C., & DePaul, V. (2024, May 1-3). Oasis Seniors Supportive Living [Conference presentation]. CAOT Conference 2024, Halifax Convention Centre, Halifax, NS, Canada.

3. Fernandes, K. (2024, March 20). Being and doing together in a naturally occurring retirement community: Pandemic experiences of older adults [Conference presentation]. CERAH Speaker Series, Lakehead University. <https://cerah.lakeheadu.ca/events/upcoming-event-march-20-2024-cerah-speaker-series-presents-being-and-doing-together-in-a-naturally-occurring-retirement-community-pandemic-experiences-of-older-adults-with-kassandra-fernandes/>

4. Labossierre, S.\* et al (2023). Cognitive health and impairment in naturally occurring retirement communities with Oasis Programs: a cross-sectional study. Canadian Association of Gerontology, Toronto, ON, Canada.

5. McCartney, K., Ramlakhan, J., Parniak, S., Donnelly, C., Wilkie, J., Malvern, R., & DePaul, V. (2023, October 26-28). Setting a future direction for Oasis using a co-design framework [Poster presentation]. Canadian Association of Gerontology, Toronto, ON, Canada.

6. Donnelly, C., Gozdra, P., Frymire, E., DePaul, V., Parniak, S., & Nguyen, P. (2023, May). Examining health utilization patterns in Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities in Ontario: Rethinking how we can support older adults [Conference presentation]. Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research Conference 2023, Montreal, QC, Canada.

7. DePaul, V; Crane, S; Au, J; Hoffmarks, A. (2023) The Oasis Model for Aging well in NORCs: From Theory to Practice. BC Housing Central Conference, Vancouver, BC.

# RECENT PUBLICATIONS

1. Fernandes K, Rudman D, McGrath C, Cooper H, DePaul V, Donnelly C, Letts L, Richardson J, Hand C. Being and Doing Together in a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community: Pandemic Experiences of Older Adults. Canadian Journal on Aging (In Press as of June 20, 2024; RCV-1813.R2)

2. Mills CM\*, Parniak S, DePaul V, Donnelly C. Oasis Senior Supportive Living: Description of a Novel Aging-in-Place Model in Ontario. Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research. 2023, 84(2);119-122. <https://doi.org/10.3148/cjdpr-2022-040>

# KEY MEDIA FEATURES

1. [New wellness clinic for seniors, CTV Ottawa, June 2024](#)

2. [What aging in place can look like: Golden Girls and NORCs, CBC's The National, May 2024](#)

3. [Oasis program keeps seniors active, Thunder Bay News Watch, October 2023](#)

4. [Help and support for naturally occurring retirement community residents, Hamilton Spectator, June 2023](#)



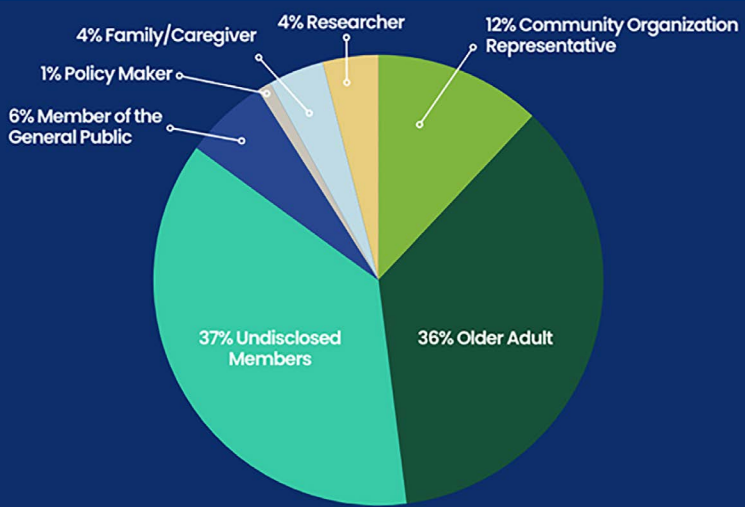
For the latest on our presentations, publications, and media features visit [oasisagingwell.com](https://oasisagingwell.com)

# Oasis Network Membership

The Oasis Network is a members-only online platform connected to the main page of the Oasis website. It serves to connect individuals and organizations with a combined interest in sharing experiences, knowledge, resources and best practices about Oasis and other naturally occurring retirement community (NORC) programs.

In the last year, the Network has grown from 238 members to 356 members; including older adults, community organization representatives, researchers, policy makers, family members, and the general public. If you are not already a member of the Network, you can join by registering at [oasisagingwell.com](https://oasisagingwell.com)

OASIS MEMBERS  
BREAKDOWN OF MEMBERS



# WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO

The Oasis Partners Summit gathered key Oasis partners from across the country to reflect on progress, exchange ideas, and set strategic goals.

The first day featured opening remarks and research updates from Dr. Catherine Donnelly and Dr. Vince DePaul, followed by a “World Café” session discussing the four Oasis pillars: Food, Social, Health/Wellness, and Physical Activity. Notable highlights include a talk by Dr. Jane Philpott on the unique value of Oasis and several panel sessions on network inspiration and program sustainability.

On the second day, the focus shifted to exploring key people's roles, funding strategies, and aligning efforts for long-term success. The event will conclude with a debrief and reflections on next steps for Oasis, reinforcing our commitment to building a robust and collaborative national network.

## Additional upcoming developments include:

- A new and updated Oasis website was successfully launched, thanks to the contributions of students Annie Webber and Alisa Robinson, who played a key role in advancing Oasis's programming and research initiatives.

Shannon Jones built upon their work from the summer, refining and finalizing the website while incorporating additional updates and enhancing communication strategies to better serve the Oasis community.

- The eagerly anticipated Oasis Cookbook is currently in its final stages. Look out for it on our new website!
- Conference presentations which will focus on key research findings to date, lessons learned from the growth and expansion of Oasis. Keep an eye on our social media networks to hear when the team will be presenting at an upcoming event.



**Oasis**

Adding life to years, and years to life.