



### Community Rounds Research Project: Building Collaborations for Seniors Services in East Toronto

Seniors' healthcare needs are increasingly prevalent among community based health service providers in Toronto. Elderly seniors are a potentially vulnerable group who may be at greatest risk from the lack of coordinated community based health services. The Community Rounds Research Project measured baseline health and service needs to estimate the extent and nature of service 'gaps' among at-risk seniors living in South East Toronto/East York. Several patterns emerged from the data, which suggest some unmet needs in the community:

- ✚ Many seniors report basic health needs which may impact heavily upon their ability to live independently, exercise effective self-care and manage their post-hospital discharge in the community – including difficulties with vision, hearing and mobility
- ✚ Housing maintenance needs – from basic repairs to needs related to access – is an ongoing concern for a substantial proportion of seniors – the majority of whom live alone
- ✚ Some seniors may be especially vulnerable – such as women who are more likely to live alone or non-English speaking seniors who may continue to have difficulty accessing services
- ✚ Symptoms of distress were reported by a small but notable group of seniors – including nervousness, insomnia, frequent crying and loneliness. In addition, several seniors reported fears around safety and security.
- ✚ Social interaction and participation was typically low – suggesting considerable isolation and vulnerability
- ✚ Collaboration between members of the health and community service sectors was valued and appeared to result in positive self-reported outcomes for everyone as a result of conducting the Community Rounds Research Project.

Charles Fehr, MA & Brenda Roche, PhD, Wellesley Institute

