

# Wellbeing in Retirement: engaging seniors in research and co creation

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Centre for Excellence in Immigrant  
and Intercultural Advancement

in partnership with



CIWA  
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association

# Presentation Outline

- ▶ About the partners
- ▶ The Project Goals
- ▶ What do we already know?
- ▶ Methods and Approach – trying something different:
  - ▶ Focused Ethnography/participant observation
  - ▶ Co Creation
- ▶ What are we learning? Reflections on our data collection and preliminary findings

# The Center for Excellence in Immigrant and Intercultural Advancement, Bow Valley College

## **4 Pillars:**

- ▶ English Language Learning
- ▶ Career Advancement
- ▶ Intercultural Development
- ▶ Research and Development

# CIWA

CIWA was created in 1982 to address the needs and concerns of immigrant and refugee women, youth, children, and families in Calgary.

## CIWA Mandate

- ▶ Vision – Empower immigrant women. Enrich Canadian society.
- ▶ Mission – To engage and integrate all immigrant women and their families in the community.
- ▶ Values – Integrity. Equity. Inclusiveness. Innovation. Leadership
  
- ▶ Core service areas
  - Intake, Settlement and Integration services
  - Literacy, Language Training and Childcare services
  - Employment services
  - Family services

# Project Goals

- ▶ Understand the experiences of retired immigrant women and the barriers and supports related to their wellbeing and social and civic engagement
- ▶ Co-create and evaluate a program that will facilitate engagement in social and civic activities and contribute to their sense of well being

# What do we already know?

- ▶ The “new retirement” and the “3<sup>rd</sup> age”
- ▶ Age at time of immigration impacts career track and economic wellbeing in retirement
- ▶ Older immigrant women are at a higher risk of poor health, and poverty than Canadian born women – and this risk is compounded if they live on their own
- ▶ Growing body of research critiquing studies that show a decline in social participation among immigrants .

# Project Methods

## Phase 1

- ▶ Interviews:
  - ▶ 25 immigrant women seniors
  - ▶ 15 stakeholders
- ▶ Focused Ethnography/Participant Observation:
  - ▶ Sample of 7 women, over 3 months

## Phase 2

- ▶ Co creation

# Focused Ethnography

- ▶ The way in which research is orchestrated has consequences of the type of knowledge produced
- ▶ “Focused Ethnography” as a method for understanding lived experiences and daily life

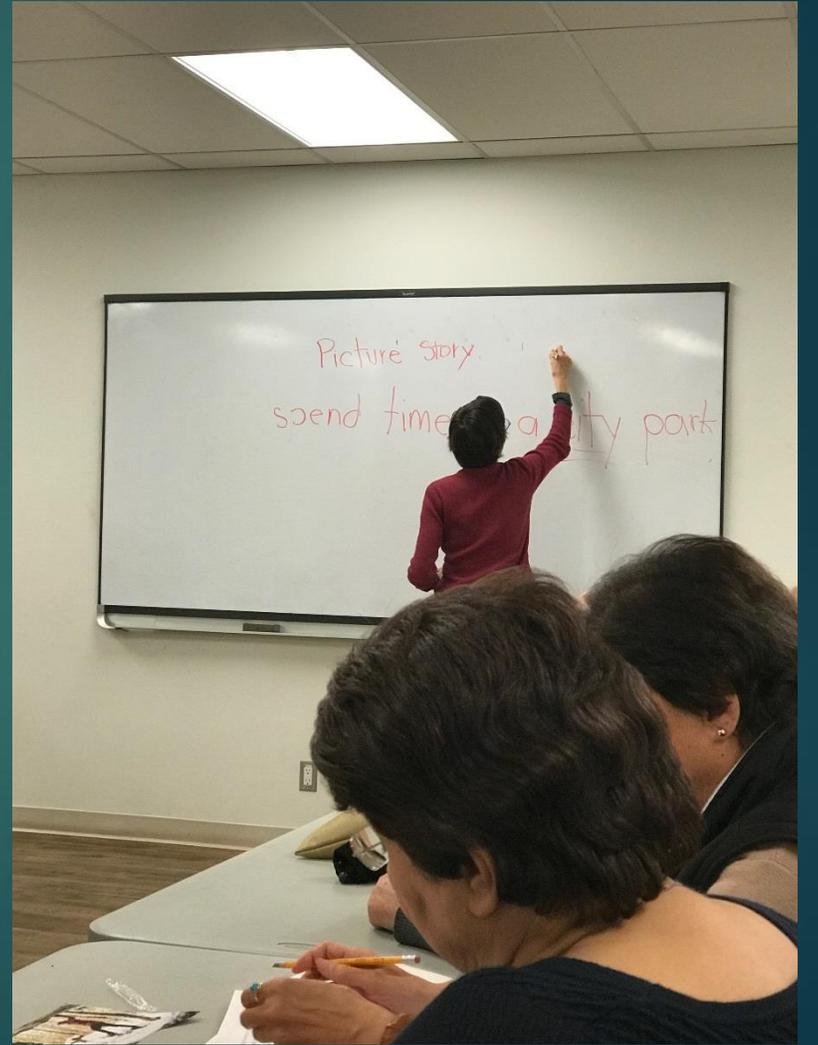


Figure 1: Yvette's routine  
at the city pool.

Tuesday & Thursdays → 12:45pm - 3:15pm  
↳ 50+ exercise, 50+ aquasize, hot tub

Last: Farewells,  
drop-off  
Yvette

### III. Hot tub

- chatting in a relaxed setting
- language of Yvette
- any interactions
- do other hot tub people interact with Yvette, how?
- setting
- mannerisms, postures...

#### Chatting:

- during hot tub;
- 1. how long have you been doing this?
- 2. Why do you like it?
- 3. Are you unable to do this for any reason? (e.g. winter, bad knee)
- 4. Do you know anyone here?

WATCH,  
PARTICIPATE  
AND CHAT

“Yvette”  
Chatting and “hanging out”

First: Pick up  
Yvette, chat  
up to exercise  
class

WATCH

### I. 50+ exercise

- cost for Yvette
- pool staff interaction
- exercise coordinator
- vocabulary of fitness workers
- how many seniors
- how is Yvette interacting with others
- any friends? long talks? small talks?
- setting

WATCH  
and PARTICIPATE

### II. 50+ aquasize

- cost for Yvette
- aquasize coordinator.
- feel “where workers place emphasis” such as posture
- vocabulary of workers.
- how many seniors
- interactions... setting...

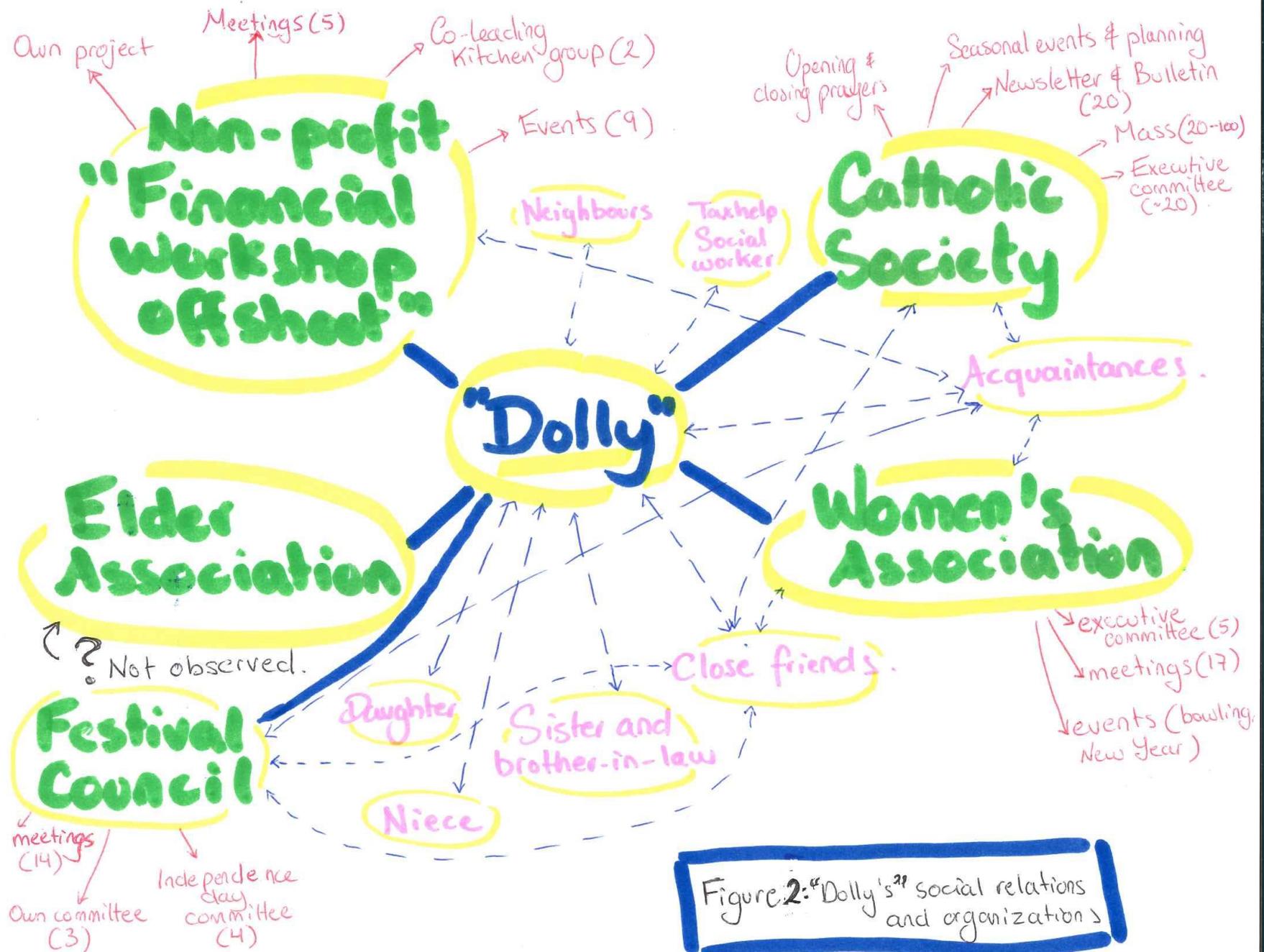


Figure 2: "Dolly's" social relations and organizations

# Co Creation

- ▶ Co creation as an attempt to mitigate power imbalances and research/practice divide
- ▶ Co creation as a way to showcase findings which often paves way for new programming or further research
- ▶ Using “frames” as a way of thinking about the different perspectives/experiences that stakeholders/partners bring to the partnership
- ▶ Co creation may or may not evolve as the project continues

# Preliminary Reflections on Data Collection

- ▶ Terms like “well being”, “health”, “coping”, and “social supports” often made sense of in different ways
- ▶ Differences in what constitutes the “good life” in multicultural society – what “moral notions” do we attach to what activity should look like in retirement?
  - ▶ For example: how do “caring” activities fit it?
- ▶ Impacts of the migration process throughout someone’s life course

# Thank you!

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