

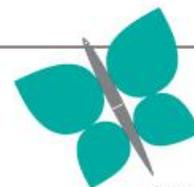
AVENS: A Community For Seniors Strategic Plan

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About AVENS

AVENS: A Community for Seniors, is a not-for-profit society incorporated in 1983 under the Societies Act of the NWT. AVENS works to build a supportive community for the health and wellness of seniors.

AVENS is located in Yellowknife, and for a number of critical programs such as long-term and dementia residential care, it serves the entire NWT. The services AVENS provides include:

- Independent Senior housing;
- Long term care;
- Dementia care;
- Day respite programming;
- Assisted living programs;

Services and support to partners such as the Alzheimer's Society, Yellowknife Senior's Society.

The context in which we operate

AVENS has a 30 year history of providing services to seniors. Over that history, AVENS has seen several successes and achievements. It has received Accreditation for the sixth time in a row, most recently with exemplary rating. It has doubled in size while effectively managing that growth. It has attracted a well-qualified CEO, who is prepared and able to help AVENS move successfully into the future.

In 2005, AVENS secured control and ownership of the land on which its campus is built, giving the organization a significant and valuable asset. In 2008, AVENS fundraised for, designed, and built AVEN Cottages, the NWT's first and only dementia care facility.

As a result of this history of achievement and service to northern seniors, AVENS has a solid, respected public reputation.

AVENS also faces its share of challenges.

As the organization grows, it must change. Like any other organization, there is internal and external resistance to change. AVENS now provides a number of services used by residents of the entire NWT (such as dementia care), yet policy-makers and politicians are challenged to effectively manage the optics of providing funding support to Yellowknife-based organizations rather than delivering these services regionally.

The demand for AVENS services has grown, and will continue to grow at an exceptionally high rate in the next decade or more.

AVENS is a front line responder and must be prepared to meet the needs of seniors for services and support. Between 2011 and 2026 the population of seniors is projected to grow dramatically: the population of seniors over age 75 across the NWT will more than double, while the number of seniors in Yellowknife will triple!

Through the Territorial Admissions Committee process, AVENS provides long-term residential care options for seniors in need. With the dramatic increase in the population of seniors over the next few years, the demand for AVENS services will rise sharply. AVENS is planning now to be ready to respond to this need, in order to minimize the growth of waiting lists and wait times.

AVENS has developed a business plan that proposes expansion of the AVENS campus using a phased approach. The \$30 million plan would see the addition of new long-term care beds and the consolidation of extended car services in Phase 1; creation of new assisted living units in Phase 2; increasing the availability of

affordable senior's housing in AVENS primary service area and enhanced assisted living supports in Phase 3; and additional dementia and long term care beds in Phase 4.

The need is great, and so are the challenges.

The four most critical challenges that AVENS must effectively address in order to achieve its vision include the following:

- all stakeholders and partners **understand the growing need, and share AVENS commitment to addressing it.**
- AVENS successfully addresses its current **infrastructure deficit.**
- AVENS evolves its **organizational structure and administrative processes** to ensure it is prepared to implement the mission, pursue the business plan, and work toward its vision.
- AVENS finds additional and alternate sources of **funding** which would provide greater sustainability for AVENS and its services.

The growing need

The NWT as a whole has 173 long-term residential care beds with zero vacancy. The waiting list for long-term care is currently 20 people. The wait time ranges from 2 to 24 months.

In the NWT there are 8 dedicated respite beds, including 4 at AVEN Cottages. These beds are full. AVENS is the only facility for dementia care in the NWT. A form of extended care, it is generally related to seniors living with Alzheimer's disease. There are 24 dementia care beds at AVEN Cottages, all of which are full.

The combined bed facilities across the NWT for long term care, extended care, dementia care, palliative care, and respite support have been operating at 95% occupancy in recent years. Due to the nature of placement there is always some lag between a bed becoming available and a client being placed in it. Therefore, a 95% occupancy rate is, in effect, a zero vacancy, particularly in high demand facilities such as AVEN Cottages.

The capacity of the system is inadequate even given current demand levels.

Levels of demand are expected to rise sharply in the next several years as our population ages.

The number of seniors in the NWT (over age 65) is conservatively projected to grow from approximately 2,450 (2011 figures) to almost 6,000 by 2026, two and a half times the current number. Infrastructure supports and capacity cannot be achieved overnight. Several years of planning and preparation are needed to even begin to put in place the supports to meet this anticipated increase.

The growing need is of concern, not only for AVENS, but for many other partners and stakeholders including the Government of the Northwest Territories (Department of Health and Social Services), the NWT and Yellowknife Seniors Societies, the Alzheimer's Society, residents and their families, and many others. It is critical that all of these partners understand, with clarity, the need for additional services and how AVENS' vision, mission, and plan to expand its campus is one important step to meeting the growing need. AVENS needs the committed support in all its forms, from partners and stakeholders.

Infrastructure deficit

The existing AVENS campus, consisting of AVEN Manor, AVEN Cottages, AVEN Ridge and AVEN Court, was constructed over a period of many years. Because of this, the infrastructure maintenance requirements vary throughout the campus. As well, facilities that worked well during initial phases of the build (for example the kitchen), are now insufficient for the size and configuration of the campus. This infrastructure deficit must be addressed in order to properly serve our residents and to ensure the safety of residents, their families, and AVENS staff.

AVENS has an infrastructure deficit, and requires additional funding to address it. The following are just some of the current needs:

- Retrofit envelop of the Manor and Courts

- Upgrade mechanical in Manor
- Replace kitchen and meal capacity
- Remove safety hazards in infrastructure
- Complete preventative maintenance to ensure the longevity of existing infrastructure

Organizational structure and administrative processes

AVENS is a not-for-profit organization. It is owned and operated by the community. While wanting to maintain the positive elements of caring and 'homelike' environment, AVENS has been, and needs to continue evolving to an organization with additional structure, effective and respected policies and procedures, and more robust operational systems. This need goes from the front line staff through management and includes the Board. For example, while all members of the Board are skilled and accomplished in their own fields, they are volunteers with limited knowledge of seniors care.

AVENS needs to have an organizational and governance structure and administrative processes that support and enable it to grow, change, and respond to current and future challenges and demand for service in a way that is operationally efficient and protects the safety of residents and staff. These include upgraded information technology and financial management systems; continuous education and skill development for staff, management, and Board; high performance standards; clear processes, procedures and expectations; and the engagement of all staff, families and partners in the vision of seniors care delivered by AVENS.

Funding avenues

Currently, the GNWT is AVENS' primary funder. Donations and fundraising augment government funding, but amounts are small.

Admissions to the bulk of AVENS' facilities is through the Territorial Admissions Committee (TAC), a committee on which AVENS does not have input or a voice. The GNWT sets the rent through legislation that AVENS can charge for residential units administered through TAC, a rate of approximately \$700. This amount is well below market rent, well below the cost of delivering service, and may even be below a resident's willingness to pay.

AVENS requires secure, long-term diversified funding to support the achievement of its vision. Options exist to do so. Fundraising is one option that has succeeded for specific building needs (for example the Dementia Centre). There is significant competition for fundraising dollars in Yellowknife. For example, Stanton Hospital, the Association for Community Living, and Betty House are all anticipating capital projects, and will require community fundraising.

Just as there is competition for fundraising dollars, there is also competition for money from the GNWT. The Legislative Assembly has many priorities, and many worthy appeals for government support. While AVENS' vision complements the Government's stated emphasis on ageing in place, political tension between funding for Yellowknife-based versus community-based projects may affect AVENS' ability to gain financial support from government.

AVENS is situated just south of the downtown core, on prime real estate. AVENS owns all of its assets, and as such, has a valuable financial asset that it may be able to leverage.

AVENS' not-for-profit status limits its ability to find more creative and market-based approaches to fund its vision of seniors living in a safe and caring community for life. As well, more research needs to be done to assess the willingness of current or future seniors to pay market rates for such a community, as is the model in southern Canada. Additionally, some for-profit external partners, such as builders, have indicated an interest in partnering with AVENS in the provision of seniors care services and residences. All of these avenues create possibilities for future, diversified and secure funding.

AVENS vision and mission

Vision: Seniors have a safe and caring community for life.

Mission: AVENS serves seniors by:

- Providing quality community living choices,
- Advocating for their needs,
- Creating supportive networks of seniors and community organizations committed to the health of seniors, and
- Delivering quality services in a safe and respectful manner.

Goals and objectives

Capacity: AVENS will have a fit-for-purpose organizational and governance structure and administrative processes designed to deliver on our vision and objectives.

Objectives

By April 1 2014, create and implement formalized role descriptions, behaviour expectations, education plans and performance evaluation processes that align with vision, mission and values and provide for the safety of our staff.	CEO
By April 1 2014, review admin structure and make required changes, including changes to financial/budgeting, information technology and human resource management.	CEO
Clarify roles of Board and management and the interface between them by April 1 2014. This will include a schedule of training, training needed (governance, finance, care, etc.), and who will deliver the training.	Board

Finance: AVENS will secure long-term diversified funding to support achievement of vision.

Objectives

Within the next 18 months, by December 31, 2014, review AVENS' status as a not-for-profit organization, including a review of assets and goodwill. Assess viability of establishing other entity forms that enable broader funding and revenue options.	Board
By January 2014, develop AVENS' position on means-tested, user pay with respect to full spectrum of care and integrate in AVENS' messaging.	Board
By October 2013, complete plan for short-term funding needs.	CEO for Board approval
By January 2014, draft plan for long-term funding which includes size, source, and	Board

<p>specificity of funding. Full plan will be finalized by April 1, 2014.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase knowledge of larger industry and players and do gap assessment to identify what’s missing in the continuum of care for seniors • Identify potential funders • Hire funding strategist 	
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Infrastructure: AVENS will have a physical infrastructure that emulates its vision/mission, supports the safety of our residents and staff, and delivers on our promise.

Objectives

Get funding support for AVENS’ infrastructure needs mentioned in October 2013 by Legislative Assembly, for inclusion in 2014 budget.	Board
<p>Develop a risk assessment to quantify risk associated with existing infrastructure and initiate a plan to mitigate or eliminate for the short- and long-term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment and mitigation plan by October 2013 • Full campus risk assessment and mitigation plan by December 2014 	CEO with Board feedback and approval
By December 2013, complete an integrated physical asset mapping and management plan that considers the maintenance of existing infrastructure and new infrastructure requirements including options for efficiencies.	CEO with Board feedback and approval
Put resources in place by 2014/15 that gives AVENS liaison and voice in the new build.	CEO

Enrolment: All stakeholders will understand, with clarity, AVENS’ vision, objectives the roles they play, and ‘what’s in it for them’ in delivering the vision.

Partners: AVENS will have committed support of all forms from partners by matching values and linking objectives.

Objectives

<p>By June 30 2013, develop framework for a stakeholder engagement plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understand who our partners are and relationships we need and how they deliver on the vision • Identify their context • Design messaging – custom and generic 	CEO
Implement stakeholder engagement plan with key partners.	CEO
Beginning June 19, implement stakeholder engagement plan with staff.	CEO
Implement stakeholder engagement plan with residents and their families.	CEO

<p>Negotiate and sign MOUs with stakeholders as appropriate</p>	<p>CEO prepares, Board approves and delivers</p>
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The road forward

In this strategic plan, AVENS has identified a clear direction, the possibilities of its vision for the future and the path to take it there. The Board of Directors is unified and cohesive in its support of this strategic plan, and AVENS has the operational leadership to succeed in achieving it. Within the overarching direction established, the CEO and management will develop and implement operational plans that will achieve the goals and objectives, and in so doing, move AVENS towards its vision of a safe and caring community for life.

While the vision is set, and the direction is clear, the road forward will bring with it significant challenges. AVENS is on a path of growth and change. This change is in direct response to the needs of our Territory and our seniors for a full continuum of housing and care supports that will enable them to live out their lives in the NWT. And as the number of seniors doubles and even triples in the next decade and beyond, AVENS is planning now for that future.

. AVENS will work closely and deliberately with its staff, its residents and their families, as well as with government and other stakeholders to manage the various challenges presented by the envisioned changes and transition in order to make AVENS a place where seniors have a safe and caring community for life