

**The Home Support Exercise Program (HSEP) in Alberta**  
**An Alberta Centre for Active Living in collaboration with the Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging.**



## The Home Support Exercise Program (HSEP) in Alberta's First Nation Communities

### What Is HSEP?

HSEP is an evidence-based physical activity and healthy eating intervention for frail older adults.

The goal of the project is to implement HSEP as an accessible community-health service in all of Alberta's First Nations communities. In partnership with the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch: Alberta Region Home and Community Care, staff will be trained to deliver the HSEP intervention to older adult clients through existing home and community care services.

### HSEP 's role in health promotion

The HSEP in Alberta project is consistent with the health recommendations made by both the federal and provincial governments. The Romanow report and the 2002 Speech from the Throne recommend that all Canadians improve their health through healthy living and physical activity.

This project also complements current recommendations of the ministries of Alberta Community Development, Alberta Health and Wellness, and Alberta Seniors. HSEP also responds to recommendations 3 and 18 of the Alberta Active Living Strategy.

Research has proven that HSEP is a successful way to connect with a marginalized and at-risk population. HSEP was designed for elderly clients who are frail and primarily homebound. HSEP significantly increases both the physical and psychological well being (quality of life) of program participants.

HSEP complements home and community cares' existing programs and provide a service that fits within the continuum of care. HSEP could also lessen the current burden on health professionals and create a more efficient and cost-effective way for communities to manage personnel.

### Who will benefit from HSEP?

- HSEP, a physical activity intervention based on prevention and maintenance, is for older adults who receive home-care services. The program can also be implemented in other settings such as day programs.
- HSEP targets home care clients who are frail, face declining mobility, and lead sedentary lifestyles. HSEP clients are often at risk for institutionalization.
- HSEP may not be appropriate for clients with acute injury or dementia or for those who currently receive professional rehabilitation therapy.

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### How HSEP works

Under the project partnership agreement, each First Nation community has the opportunity to gain HSEP capacity and sustainability. However, communities will be responsible for the associated costs of program delivery.

After a community implements the program via home care,

- the home care nurse refers appropriate clients to HSEP;
- an HSEP-trained home health aide goes through the program with the client, including the HSEP exercises, the healthy eating resources, and ways of charting progress—this orientation should take about an hour and a half and can be done over multiple, short sessions;
- the home health aide then provides ongoing social support to the client, e.g., informal HSEP prompts and reminders during the client's home care services.

The Alberta Centre for Active Living has piloted HSEP in both the Calgary Health Region and the Chinook Health Region. Results of those pilot evaluations are available on the Centre's web site (see the Supporting Reports section of *Active Independence: The Home Support Exercise Program in Alberta* [www.centre4activeliving.ca/older-adults/hsep/](http://www.centre4activeliving.ca/older-adults/hsep/)).

When we started planning to deliver the program in First Nations communities, we decided that the program material should be changed to make it more culturally appropriate and meet the needs of First Nations older adults. Training of home care staff occurred via video conferencing and in person in the fall of 2005. An evaluation of the program in First Nations communities was completed in 2006.

### Where to Find out More

The following resources will give you more information about HSEP.

- Alberta Centre for Active Living. *Active Independence: The Home Support Exercise Program in Alberta* ([www.centre4activeliving.ca/olderadults/hsep/](http://www.centre4activeliving.ca/olderadults/hsep/)).
- Alberta Centre for Active Living. (2005). *Home Support Exercise Program (HSEP) in Alberta: Calgary pilot-test evaluation results*. Retrieved June 23, 2008, from [www.centre4activeliving.ca/older-adults/hsep/calgary-report.pdf](http://www.centre4activeliving.ca/older-adults/hsep/calgary-report.pdf).
- Dechaine, J., & Berry, T. (2006). *Home Support Exercise Program (HSEP) in Alberta: Chinook Health Region pilot-test results*. Retrieved June 23, 2008, from [www.centre4activeliving.ca/olderadults/hsep/2006/chinook-report.pdf](http://www.centre4activeliving.ca/olderadults/hsep/2006/chinook-report.pdf).
- Jones, G. R. (2003/2004). *The Home Support Exercise Program for frail older adults*. *Stride: Excellence in Seniors Care*, 5, 4–8.
- Jones, G. R., & Frederick, J. A. B. (2003). The Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging's Home Support Exercise Program. *Geriatrics and Aging*, 6 (7). Retrieved June 23, 2008, from [www.geriatricsandaging.ca/PDF/PDFJuly2003/0607homesupport.pdf](http://www.geriatricsandaging.ca/PDF/PDFJuly2003/0607homesupport.pdf)

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- Shanthi Jacob Johnson, C., Myers, A. M., Scholey, L. M., Cyarto, E., & Ecclestone, N. A. (2003). Outcome evaluation of the Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging's Home Support Exercise Program for frail older adults. *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity*, 11, 408–424.
- Tudor-Locke, C., Myers, A. M., Shanthi-Jacob, C., Jones, G., Lazowski, D. A., & Ecclestone, N. A. (2000). Development and formative evaluation of the Centre for Activity and Aging's Home Support Exercise Program for frail older adults. *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity*, 8, 59–75.

For more information about the Alberta Centre for Active Living and details about HSEP in Alberta, please visit the Centre's web site at [www.centre4activeliving.ca](http://www.centre4activeliving.ca).

*Last updated: June 23, 3008*