



Corporation of the Village of Cumberland

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News Release

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CUMBERLAND'S SENIORS ARE GETTING AN EXTRA PEP IN THEIR STEP

[Cumberland]—This September, an innovative program that motivates seniors to get up, get out, and get active is coming to Cumberland Recreation and it will be free to join. Choose to Move is a six-month program based on scientific research that motivates and supports individuals 65 or older to get moving and meet new people in the community.

Based on research from University of British Columbia's Active Aging Research Team, Choose to Move is designed to help seniors to set and meet their physical activity goals. The researchers behind the program observed that while most British Columbian seniors were struggling to meet the recommended amount of weekly physical activity, few programs were actually helping in a sustainable way. "One reason why this program seems to work is that it is choice-based. This means that participants set goals and choose activities that are of interest to them to help them achieve their goals," explained Christa Hoy, one of the researchers. "With the support of their activity coach and peers, participants add more physical activity into their daily lives, which makes it easier to continue being active once the program is finished" Hoy added.

Choose to Move is designed for people who are not currently active, but want get moving. Participants work one-on-one with an activity coach to develop a personal plan that fits with their preferences and lifestyle. For the first three months, participants meet with their activity coach for guidance, and will connect at least once a month with their peers and coach for support.

"Choose to Move is unique because participants get to choose how they want to be active" said Genevieve Burdett at Cumberland Recreation, where Choose to Move is offered. It is not a fitness class, so participants don't have to go to the gym – instead they choose activities they like to do.

Choose to Move is offered through the BC Recreation and Parks Association and the YMCA, with the support of UBC's Active Aging Research Team led by Drs. Heather McKay and Joanie Sims-Gould. The researchers will monitor Choose to Move across the province and evaluate its impact on health, mobility, and social connectedness of older adults.

In fact, early evaluation of Choose to Move revealed that many participants echoed Hoy's words, "Choose to Move has been beneficial for me, particularly because of its flexibility. My

activity levels have increased and my days are busier. I love that. I have more choices so I am choosing to move,” said a past participant.

The motivation that comes from support is also central to the success of Choose to Move. Marnie, a participant in Kamloops, explained that Choose to Move has, “motivated [her] to get up and do something...almost every day,” She added that, through the program, she has now has a group who help to motivate each other to continue to stick to their physical activity goals.

So far, Choose to Move has run in 28 communities across British Columbia. There is a free information session being offered on Tuesday September 11th, from 1 to 2:30 pm at Cumberland Recreation. After attending the information session, interested participants may sign up for the entire free program which starts the following Tuesday September 18th at 1:00 pm. To register for the information session, visit cumberland.ca/topics/recreation and click on ‘register online’, or call 250 336-2231.

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For more information: cumberland.ca

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About Choose to Move

Choose to Move is free and flexible 6-month program that provides older adults with the motivation and support to become more active. Choose to Move can help participants to integrate activity into daily routine, meet new friends, and make a positive change. Participants receive both individual and group support to develop and stick to a personal activity plan that includes activities they enjoy and are able to do. Choose to Move is great for anyone age 65 and older that wants to become active. To learn more visit www.choosetomove.info.