

Men Only Happy Hour (MOHH)

Growing Positive Self-Identity through Social Engagement

Theme: Neighbourhoods

Addressing social isolation for MALE seniors in the community

WHAT IS THIS INITIATIVE ABOUT?

Addressing Misconceptions About Active Ageing Centres (AAC) in engaging older men:

- **Perception of AACs as places for the elderly and infirm:** Many men in their early senior years (60s-70s) do not identify as "elderly" and resist participating in what they perceive as facilities for the dependent or frail.
- **Gender bias in programming:** There is a common perception that AAC activities predominantly cater to female interests (e.g., arts and crafts, cooking, gentle exercise classes).
- **Reluctance to participate in mixed-gender settings:** Some men feel uncomfortable engaging in activities alongside women, particularly in contexts where they might be learning new skills or appear vulnerable.

The Men Only Happy Hour (MOHH) program was specifically designed to overcome these barriers through several strategic approaches:

- **Gender-specific programming:** Creating a comfortable, male-only environment that eliminates concerns about mixed-gender interactions.
- **Location strategy:** Conducting sessions in void deck spaces rather than inside AAC facilities, removing the psychological barrier of "entering" what is perceived as a feminine or elderly space.
- **Social focus:** Prioritizing camaraderie and peer bonding opportunities that address the significant social isolation many men experience post-retirement.
- **Health-promoting framework:** Establishing clear guidelines (No Alcohol, No Gambling, No Smoking) that maintain a healthy environment while providing positive alternatives.

INITIATIVE'S IMPACT

Breaking Barriers, Building Brotherhood REMARKABLE IMPACT

Before MOHH: Only 2-3 male seniors participated in Centre activities

After MOHH Launch (August 2023)

- **175 men** have joined at least one Active Ageing Programme
 - **144 men** from within our service boundary
 - **26% engagement** of all male seniors in our service area
 - **Weekly attendance** of 25-30 men, with record high of 40
- MOHH is entirely peer-led, with programming developed and facilitated by male volunteers and regular members, creating authentic connections and ownership.

SUCCESS FACTORS

- Addresses misconceptions about Active Ageing Centers (AAC)
- Creates comfortable space for male socialization
- Offers meaningful alternatives to unhealthy habits
- Builds on existing interests and strengths of senior men



PLANS AHEAD

Current Stage

The Men Only Happy Hour (MOHH) initiative has successfully completed its establishment and initial growth phase, demonstrating remarkable success in engaging previously unreached male seniors.

Next Steps (6-12 Months)

1. Program Enhancement
 - **Skills Development Pathway:** Introduce structured progression tracks allowing participants to build competencies in areas of interest (e.g., technology, fitness, leadership)
 - **Intergenerational Connections:** Partner with schools and youth organizations for meaningful cross-age interactions
 - **Health Monitoring Initiative:** Implement informal health check-ins and wellness tracking to identify and address men's health concerns early
 - **Mentorship Model:** Establish formal peer mentorship pairings between long-term members and newcomers
2. Community Integration
 - **Microjob Pathway:** Create structured transition opportunities for MOHH participants to engage in the senior microjob program
 - **Community Service Projects:** Launch quarterly service initiatives allowing MOHH members to contribute their skills to community improvement
 - **Public Showcase Events:** Organize demonstrations and exhibitions highlighting participant achievements and talents
 - **Digital Story Archive:** Collect and preserve participants' life stories and wisdom through audio/video recordings

Scaling and Collaboration Plans (1-3 Years)

1. Expansion Strategy
 - **Satellite MOHH Groups:** Launch smaller affiliated groups in nearby neighborhoods to increase accessibility
 - **Multi-Site Implementation:** Replicate the MOHH model in 3-5 additional MWS Active Ageing Centres
2. Partnership Development
 - **Healthcare Integration:** Partner with polyclinics and community health teams for preventive health programming
 - **Corporate Engagement:** Establish partnerships with corporations for skills-based volunteering and program sponsorship
 - **Interest-Based Organizations:** Collaborate with special interest groups (e.g., photography clubs, sports associations) to expand activity offerings
3. Sustainability Planning
 - **Volunteer Leadership Pipeline:** Develop structured volunteer recruitment and leadership development pathway
 - **Funding Diversification:** Secure multi-year funding through grants, sponsorships, and minimal revenue-generating activities
 - **Resource Development:** Create program toolkit and training materials for efficient implementation across sites
 - **Digital Engagement:** Develop complementary digital platform to maintain connections between in-person sessions

OUR OFFER

Share for Learning - Highlights what you're offering to share about MOHH:

1. Program blueprint with proven strategies
2. Impact data and insights from your experience
3. Real participant journeys and case studies

Support for Adoption - Details how you'll help others implement MOHH:

1. Implementation support with consultation and training
2. Ready-to-use resource toolkit
3. Knowledge transfer sessions and observation opportunities

Collaboration Opportunities - Outlines potential partnership areas:

1. Joint research initiatives
2. Expansion partnerships for co-development
3. Innovation projects for new program elements

