



## **Emerging Trends Among Seniors and Disability Groups: From Wisdom and Lessons to New Ideas**

“Seniors and Disability Communities - Unite!” might be the cry heard at the Steering Committee for a new participatory action research project recently funded by Human Resources Canada. Well, at least get together.

In undertaking this project, the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies is responding to the emerging issue of aging and disability - the idea of bringing together disability and aging issues is a hot topic at this time at both federal and provincial levels.

With our aging population, there are an increasing number of people who are ‘aging into disablement’. At the same time, there are an increasing number of people with long-term disabilities who, due to better health and community supports, are experiencing the added effects of ‘aging’. These two groups have remained distinct even though they share many commonalities. However, in terms of community participation, barriers and facilitators in the environment, many of the needs and gaps are similar. This project will begin to develop strategies and tools to strengthen the seniors and disability communities' capacity to respond to common issues and emerging challenges. It will develop stronger networks and associations between individuals, organizations, and governments.

The goal of the project will be to foster a dialogue between Manitoba disability and seniors organizations on common issues, gaps and trends in services and programs. Lessons learned will be shared and an on-going Manitoba network on aging(seniors) and disability issues will be developed.

This project takes a community participatory action approach: seniors and persons with disabilities will have major roles in planning, data gathering, analyzing, reporting, network building and next steps. They will collaborate to find new ways to work together and network to improve the resources and supports in the community.

The initial step for this project will be to develop partnerships and collaborations when we form the Steering Committee. Initial partners are ILRC and the Seniors and Healthy Aging Secretariat.