



DAY 2: PLENARY PANEL (09:15 – 10:30) – AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES AND COMMUNITIES – “CREATING ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS”

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

- Dr. Suzanne Garon, Universite deSherbrooke (Canada)
- Dr. Debra Whitman, American Association of Retired Persons (United States of America)
- Mr. Gertjan Baars, PricewaterhouseCoopers (The Netherlands)

ABSTRACT

Developing environments responsive to the aspirations and needs of older people has become a major concern for social and public policy. On the political and policy front, cities and communities being more *age-friendly* is an increasing that builds on the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities toward an age-friendly world.

Population ageing poses a number of challenges not only for policy makers but increasingly for urban planners. The number, location, health, functional ability of the older population will impact on everything from seating design, the width of our footpaths, to the way we plan transport, roads, amenities, public spaces and housing. More and more people are *ageing in place* which means our communities, cities, regions and towns need to accommodate the mobility of older people.

Urban and town planners have an enormous opportunity to help shape the future of a built enabling environment that responds to the needs of people of all ages and the inclusion of older people across the broad spectrum abilities during the life course. The Age-friendly Cities and Communities framework can also be an important part in the re-development of cities and communities after disasters. Creating an enabling community for all from the beginning can become a tool in preventing future losses in disasters as roads and houses can be built with the environment and population in mind which would ensure a safer community.

This Plenary panel aims to provide a critical perspective on what has been termed ‘age-friendly cities and communities’ by shifting the focus from questions such as ‘What is an ideal city/community for older people?’ to the question of ‘How age-friendly are cities and communities?’

This approach, it is argued, might be more suited to deal with the complexities of cities and communities as sites of interlocking and conflicting commercial, social, and political interests. This Plenary is developed to explore: first, the main factors driving the age-friendly debate; second, constraints and opportunities for older people living in urban environments; third, options for a critical social policy; fourth, the challenges and opportunities of a disaster prone world; and fifth, examples of involving older people in the development of age-friendly and disaster prepared environments.

Interested in submitting an abstract and/or registering for the conference, go to the IFA 13th Global Conference on Ageing website at <http://www.ifa2016.org.au>.