Louth Age Friendly Programme
Ireland

PROBLEM

Staying connected to events and people and having access to timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing. Lack of awareness of what is on offer, or how to access it, prevents many older people from accessing useful services or resources.

A reliable flow of accessible information about community news, activities, and opportunities keeps older people active and involved, and is critical for those who have few formal or informal networks to call on.

Information today is delivered in ways few could have imagined ten and twenty years ago — and many still don't know how to approach this change.

As more and more services and information move exclusively online, it is vital to make sure that older people stay connected.

Age-friendly communities recognise that not everyone has a smartphone or Internet access, and that information needs to be disseminated through a variety of means.

Older people have reported, through extensive consultation across Ireland, that they want to:

- Access information on services, entitlements, opportunities, and activities easily, and through a variety of means.

- Make informed decisions and choices about what really matters to them.

ACTION

The multi-agency Age Friendly Programmes are responding to this problem by:

- Providing accessible information systems via 'one-stop shop' kiosks, Directories of Services, and simplified local authority application systems on housing options, grants, and services.

- Developing and disseminating guidance to provide age-friendly information and communication.

- Encouraging public, voluntary, and commercial service providers to offer person-to-person assistance on request.

- Offering low-cost training on the use of smartphones and IT devices to older people.

- Providing Age Friendly Communication training to local government staff, customer-facing personnel, and many service providers.

RESULT

LMETB (Louth & Meath Education and Training Board) are running a 'Staying Connected Initiative'. This is to help people learn how to use technology. Expressions of interest can be made over the phone. Once expressions of interest are received these are passed onto the IT tutor, who then makes contact to arrange a support call and go through any issues which may need addressing.

Tutors are available to remotely support adult learners of all ages in staying connected with friends and family online.

The tutors provide one hour of phone support to anyone who needs assistance in using the internet or social media for chatting or messaging.

SOURCE: Louth County Council,
https://agefriendlyireland.ie/