# Framework for Better Access to WIRE for Older People

## BACKGROUND

As part of the Better Access project, funded by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, **WIRE has developed a set of tools to improve access for older people who use our services.**

The following document provides a framework for how WIRE can continue this work in every aspect of its structure and operations, continue to work towards accessibility.

This document also includes checklists for key areas of work within WIRE.

This document is intended to be used in conjunction with the WIRE booklet, *Better Access for Women, Nonbinary and Gender Diverse People Over 50: An information booklet for community organisations*.

## THE FRAMEWORK

We know that accessibility is a systemic problem and it requires systemic solutions. This framework calls for WIRE to be accountable to systemic change throughout our organisation to assess, address and monitor accessibility for women, nonbinary and gender diverse people over 50.

For WIRE to be truly accessible, there must be opportunities for a wide variety of people over 50 to be involved in all parts of the organisation. This includes opportunities on the board, in management, in the staff and volunteer group, and among service users.

Given that people over 50 have a wide range of experiences and identities, WIRE must hold space and remain flexible to support differing and changing needs. We must also continue to consult with those who are engaging with WIRE about their needs as well as assessing who is, or is not engaging with our organisation.

As we improve access for older people, it is crucial that WIRE is committed to continuous change to improve accessibility.

## Accountability

- Ensure ongoing resources are allocated to this process
- Develop structures of accountability in this process
    - Who is responsible?
    - What will WIRE do if accessibility is not ensured?
    - How can people raise concerns and what will WIRE do to support them?
    - Commit to repair when change is not made

## Assessment

- Commit to regular assessments of the met and unmet needs of people engaging with WIRE
    - Continue to improve assessments over time
- Who is WIRE currently accessible to?
    - Ensure this is measured in multiple ways
    - Ensure this is measured across different areas of the organisation, e.g. board, management, staff, volunteers, callers, etc.
- Who is not accessing WIRE?
    - Build relationships with a variety of communities
    - Consult with a variety of communities on ways to remove barriers
- How is WIRE ensuring safety during the assessment process?
    - Ensure confidentiality
    - Address resistance from within WIRE

## Addressing accessibility

- Provide ongoing opportunities for staff training and professional development
- Develop an avenue for consultation when barriers to access arise
- Believe the needs of older people.
- Commit to removing or minimising barriers identified during assessments
- Be flexible and diverse in strategies used to address accessibility
- Communicate clearly when accessibility cannot be addressed

## Monitor

- Continue to assess the met and unmet needs of people engaging with WIRE
    - Incorporate assessment of any changes that are made
- Maintain a variety of avenues for feedback that are clearly and publicly available

## CHECKLISTS

### HR policies and board

- How do WIRE's policies support this framework?
- Who is represented on the board?
- Who is missing? How does WIRE ensure that missing voices are represented?
- How can the participation of people over the age of 50 with diverse experience be improved?
- Does WIRE's documentation speak to people over the age of 50 (vision, values, strategic plan)?
- Does WIRE provide information, learning and development opportunities for board members and staff to improve their understanding of the needs of people over 50?
- Are WIRE's practices in line with the guiding documentation (including HR Policy & Procedure Manual, Service delivery Manual and Cultural Safety Policy)?
- Are these practices flexible to accommodate change?
- Are there processes in place to identify and respond to issues surrounding cultural safety?
- How is the organisation's inclusive practice monitored?
- How is it measured? And how often?

## Communications

- Who is represented in the communications strategy?
- Who is missing?
- How does the WIRE communicate with older people?
- Who is represented in the language that is used?
- Who is represented in the images that are used? Can artwork or logos that do not represent people be used?
- Does the information being communicated include specific information for older people where relevant, e.g. celebrating community events and organisations in newsletters and online?
- Are the diverse experiences of older people included in a way that avoids stereotyping?
- Is information effectively communicated to older people?
- Does the communication demonstrate that WIRE is sincere about inclusion?
- Does WIRE share their messaging to a variety of organisations that are run by and for older people?

## Service delivery

- Who is represented here?
- Who is missing?
- Is the physical environment welcoming and accessible to older people?
- Are the staff sensitive to the needs of older people, including those accessing the service or colleagues
- Are there resources provided that support older people to feel safe when they come in to the centre, e.g. inclusive statements, images and symbols in public areas?
- Are the needs of older people taken into account in the available resources, e.g. do resources include organisations and services by and for older people, or cover issues that often affect older people?
- Is the process for accessing information well signed and easy to understand?
- Is there assistance available if access is only available via technology, e.g. computer, telephone, National Relay Service?
- Is information available in variety of ways, e.g. large print, screen reader, simple English and different languages?
- Are the needs of older people taken into account in the design and delivery of workshops and programs run by WIRE?