

# CARS

Communities Achieving  
Responsive Services

## Fact Sheet #8

# What is CARS?

When you live in rural remote and northern Canada, you know how hard it can be to find and access services - whether it's services for children, families, youth, adults or seniors. Even if services or supports are available to you, they are often not available in your own community, during the hours you need them, or in a way that responds to your individual needs.

To help rural remote and northern communities access the services they need, Rural Voices, a national support network, has developed a process called CARS (Communities Achieving Responsive Services). CARS is a community owned and community directed process that can be used to improve how well present services respond to the needs of community people. CARS also can help communities develop services that they presently don't have – but need.

The CARS process includes a series of steps that bring community members together to identify challenges and needs in the community and to develop creative solutions to those challenges and needs. The CARS process focuses on getting things done by working together, identifying community assets, building new community partnerships, bringing additional resources into the community and learning how to celebrate each little success!

CARS is an open community process that everyone is invited, and encouraged, to participate in. In fact, CARS will not be successful in a community without the participation of its citizens. Some community members who could participate in the CARS process include:

- community parents
- community volunteers
- area businesses
- service clubs
- local church groups
- community committees
- non profit organizations and services
- public services like education or public health
- politicians
- government departments.

Rural Voices is training people in communities across Canada to be facilitators of the CARS process. CARS facilitators can be any community member with an interest in improving services in their community. For example, **you** could be trained as a CARS facilitator.

CARS facilitators will develop the skills to support community members to work towards improving access to services in their local community. Facilitators will help their community identify leadership, develop a vision and move that vision forward through collective community action and change. Over the next three years, Rural Voices will provide ongoing support to people who are developing the skills and capacity necessary to help their community participate in the CARS process.

For more information of the CARS process, please contact Rural Voices at 1-866-255-0687 or contact Rural Voices by email at [ruralvoices@xplornet.com](mailto:ruralvoices@xplornet.com) .