

Active Aging in British Columbia

Case Studies of Community Actions (Draft)

Printed: June 24, 2008

Draft

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Note to Readers

Active Aging in British Columbia: Case Studies of Community Actions is a compilation of thirty case studies that showcase practical and innovative community projects and programs that have made a substantial impact in the community and the lives of older adults in British Columbia.

The report details came from various sources. The majority of the information came from the BC Recreation and Parks Association's *Active Aging Consultation Report* and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities' grant programs. Reports and applications were collected from pilot projects, grant projects and individual community-funded projects from across the province. Please note that the case studies included in the report do not represent a comprehensive list of projects or programs in BC; however, they provide a good foundation of examples of programs and projects that may be helpful in your community.

Please contact Tamara Codner at Tamara.Codner@gov.bc.ca or at 250 952-2311 if you would like to receive a copy of the published report.

Introduction

British Columbia (BC) is home to one of the most rapidly aging populations in Canada. As of 2004, 14.7 percent of BC's population was over the age of 65; by 2031, this figure will rise to 23.5 percent.¹ Until 2011, when the first wave of the Baby Boomer generation begins turning 65 years old, the fastest growing segment of British Columbia's aging population will be those individuals over the age of 85. If aging is to be a positive experience, longer life must be accompanied by continuing opportunities for health, participation and security.

As services and programs for older adults are offered by a large number of provincial, local and community based organizations and agencies, further success in promoting active aging requires the collaboration of many sectors. Encouraging active aging requires collaborative action and the coordinated efforts of government ministries, health authorities, local governments, non-profit, private and voluntary sectors, academia and older adults themselves. No single agency or organization can effectively address active aging without engaging with its partners.

Seniors' organizations, local governments and health authorities have indicated that they want information and opportunities to share promising practices with their colleagues who offer similar programs around the province. They want to know what the rest of BC is doing to support positive aging in their communities.

This report is a compilation of thirty case studies that showcase practical and innovative community projects and programs that have made a real impact in the community and the lives of older adults in BC.

The case studies provide a useful and practical tool to help local governments, health authorities, and organizations involved with older adults build on existing good practice which will result in healthier, more active and productive seniors. By sharing these case study examples from around the province, we can promote collaboration and partnership and in the end, communities in BC will be better prepared for our aging population.

Setting the Context

The case studies are categorized by the following population sizes:

1. Less than 50,000 people
2. Between 50,000 and 250,000 people
3. More than 250,000 people

¹ Ministry of Labour and Citizen Services, 2006

BC Stats' British Columbia Municipal Population Estimates, December 2006, was the source for determining population size.

We recommend that you read through the report in its entirety. Programs offered in smaller communities can often be adapted and successfully implemented in larger communities and vice versa. Contact information, if you want to learn more about a particular project or program, is located at the end of each case study and at the end of the report.

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Communities With a Population of Less than 50,000 People

{insert picture}

Age-Friendly Project

Community/Region: Village of Alert Bay, BC

- The population is estimated at 600

Overview of Project

The Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors endorsed a Canadian Age-Friendly Rural/Remote Communities Initiative (AFRRCI) in 2006. The outcome will be a guide for rural and remote communities to assist them in creating environments to support healthy aging and an aging population.

Municipalities, unincorporated communities and First Nations communities with populations of less than 2,000 were invited to submit proposals indicating their interest in participating in the AFRRCI. The Village of Alert Bay and the 'Namgis First Nation submitted a joint proposal and were chosen to participate as residents of Cormorant Island. Nine other rural and/or remote communities from across Canada were also chosen to take part in this initiative.

The initiative involved holding focus groups to identify the major physical, social and environmental barriers to active aging and to develop possible solutions and opportunities for community action. The focus groups took place in spring 2007 and included seniors, caregivers, local businesses and organizations as well as municipal employees and other community leaders. There were a maximum of 12 to 15 participants in each of the two focus groups. A brochure for seniors was produced based on the feedback received from the focus groups. The brochure provides information and phone numbers that are important to seniors. Benches were identified as a need in the community. To address that, benches will be constructed and placed in key locations around the village so that seniors can have a place to sit and rest when they are walking around. Other findings of the focus groups will be synthesized into a Rural and Remote Age-Friendly Community Guide and be made available to small communities across Canada in fall 2007. The Guide will be gifted to the World Health Organization (WHO) to support seniors living in smaller communities around the world.

Rationale for Project

The WHO, the Public Health Agency of Canada, the provinces of British Columbia and Manitoba, and several international jurisdictions, are collaborating on an Age-Friendly Cities Project to identify barriers to age-friendliness and to contribute to the development of a global Age-Friendly Cities Guide. Given the high proportion of smaller communities in this country, Canada decided to lead a parallel initiative that focuses on rural and remote communities. Alert Bay was chosen as one of the pilot sites for this initiative. Since the funding was made available to carry out the initiative, Alert Bay was pleased to participate.

Project Delivery

The project took eight weeks to plan and two days of focus group meetings. The meetings took place at the local health centre. The brochures that were produced as a result of the project are available at the Village Office and at the Visitor Information Centre.

Resource Requirements

The Village of Alert Bay is leading the project. Partners include:

- 2010 Legacies Now
- BC Ministry of Health
- BC Recreation and Parks Association
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Union of British Columbia Municipalities

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- \$5,000 in direct costs- includes production of the brochure and the wood for the benches
- In-kind support – volunteer hours developing the brochure

Funding for the project was provided by the Ministry of Health in the amount of \$5,000.

Evaluation

The project has not yet been evaluated. The report is expected to be released in fall 2007; however, the project has begun to meet its objectives by increasing awareness, identifying gaps, gathering suggestions and generating practical solutions for making the community more age-friendly. To date, the brochures have been well-received and the benches are expected to be useful and very much appreciated.

Sustainability

To create a sustainable plan for age-friendly rural and remote communities, including the Village of Alert Bay, ongoing funding is essential. Without adequate financial support, it is difficult for small communities to develop age-friendly and supportive environments.

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Centre for Active Aging

Community/Region: Sunshine Coast, BC

- The population is estimated at 30,000

Overview of Project

The Centre for Active Aging is a project that started in December 2006 and finished in March 2007. The project consisted of the following:

- 1) A feasibility study to investigate the potential for the creation of a centre for healthy aging focused on the particular dynamics of smaller communities. The study included information gathering on similar centres in Canada or elsewhere as well as the identification of potential funding sources;
- 2) A collection of baseline information on the age-friendliness of the Sunshine Coast from the perspective of a representative sampling of active seniors;
- 3) An inventory of the intellectual capital residing within the elder community

The goal of the project was to examine how to harness the energy of a rapidly growing population of people over 55 years of age through studying what enabled a group of active seniors to stay active and involved in their communities. Conversely, the project also sought to examine what factors put these same people at risk of being less active. By focusing on those seniors who are already active in the community, the hope was that the project would increase our understanding of how to create a community where all seniors become or remain active throughout their lives.

A survey was generated and distributed through emails, and hard copies were left in a variety of community locations. A total of 75 surveys were returned. In addition, focus groups were held in three primary communities of the Sunshine Coast: Gibsons, Sechelt, and Pender Harbour. Information gathered through both of these methods provided the baseline information for the project.

Rationale for Project

The project was developed on the basis of the rapidly growing aging population and the high proportion of seniors in the community. Because of these changing demographics, a need was recognized to explore the potential for establishing a centre that could expand learning opportunities, harness the wealth of social and intellectual knowledge and experience of these citizens and develop research partnerships to study the impact of an aging population in small communities.

The project is evidence-based. The rapid growth of the Eldercollege Program at their campus and the increase in the number of older people moving to the community led to the decision to explore the connection between the demand for programs and the expanding talent pool of highly skilled retirees.

Project Delivery

The information was gathered through surveys, focus groups, and interviews throughout the Sunshine Coast, and by internet research on other centres in Canada and the United States. There were also outreach efforts through individual contacts and seniors' organizations. The information gathered will primarily be used by the Eldercollege Program and by the campus advisory committee to explore ways of responding to some of the needs and concerns identified.

Promotion of the program was achieved by word-of-mouth, posters, and direct contact from the project management team or consultants.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization for the project was Capilano College. The Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) was a partner through its Housing and Support Initiative.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- \$15,000 in direct costs
- In-kind support from the college including volunteers to help with project management

The funding for the project was provided through a one-time grant from UBCM. This covered the cost of carrying out the project, including information gathering by paid consultants. Additional funding is currently being pursued for following up on some of the project's recommendations.

Evaluation

The project reached its goal and was able to gather relevant information and identify some of the barriers and challenges in expanding the Eldercollege Program as well as some of the values and beliefs that will influence this process. Contact was also made with two other institutions with studies for seniors, one at the University of North Carolina and one at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland. Both of these programs provided models of development that reflected the original vision of this project.

The management team met regularly throughout the 4-month project and in the end a final report was created.

Sustainability

The most significant challenge continues to be the lack of financial support for seniors' studies. As long as social policy is based on the belief that older people have already received the publicly supported education that they are entitled to, it is anticipated that it

will be very difficult to develop more comprehensive seniors' programs in small communities.

Strong leadership and the organizational capacity to implement the project in such a short time line was one of the reasons that this project was a success.

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Meet and Munch

Community/Region: District of West Vancouver, BC

- The population is estimated at 44,000

Overview of Program

The Meet and Munch program is an outreach program that has been offered at the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre for 11 years. The program targets frail and isolated seniors in the community. The goals of the Meet and Munch Program are to provide nutritious meals to seniors and to provide opportunities to increase social connectedness. In order to participate in the program, the potential participant must be referred to a Senior Outreach Worker. Senior Outreach Workers are employees of the District of West Vancouver and they help recruit isolated seniors to the Meet and Munch program. As part of the screening process, the Outreach Worker interviews the potential participant to make sure that the program is the right fit for the individual. Referrals often come from family members, friends, health practitioners, health authority staff and program participants. Currently, the group is made up of women ages 75 and older who live alone in the community.

Rationale for Program

As the population ages, increasing numbers of older adults are at risk of being socially isolated and lonely. With the trend to encourage older adults to live longer at home or in the community, the issue of social isolation takes on greater importance. The Meet and Munch program was developed as part of an outreach programming strategy in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health to address this issue. For many seniors, this program is the only opportunity they have for outside contact on a weekly basis.

Program Delivery

The program runs once a week and is held at the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre. On the morning of the program, a program leader calls the member to remind them of the program pick up. The leader then goes with a bus and driver to pick up the members from their homes and brings them back to the centre. Once they arrive at the centre they place their lunch order and eat with other members. Lunch is followed by group activities such as crossword puzzles and discussion. The sessions run for about two hours. Marketing and promotion of the program is done through brochures and referrals from the health authority.

Resource Requirements

The West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre is the lead organization for the program with the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority as its partner.

Some experience in gerontology is required in order to be a volunteer for the program.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- \$8500 per year in direct costs

The Vancouver Coastal Health Authority provides \$20,000 funding to outreach programs at the centre each year; a portion of this funding supports the Meet and Munch program.

Members of the program pay \$3 for each visit, plus the cost of their lunch. The Meet and Munch program would not be financially sustainable without funding support from large grants or endowment contributions. Other than one paid staff member, the program relies on a volunteer driver and mealtime helpers to carry out the program.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the program takes place by looking at the program numbers over the years and through verbal feedback from the members. The program has consistently reached its goals. This success can be attributed to the leaders, both volunteer and paid. Having the funds available is also an important reason that the program has been successful. The program is reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Sustainability

Continual funding will ensure that the program is successful in the future.

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Penticton Steps Out

Community/Region: Penticton, BC

- The population is estimated at 35,000

Overview of Program

Penticton Steps Out is a pedometer walking program based out of the Penticton Community Centre with a focus on physical activity and healthy living. The program targets people of all ages and abilities and has been popular since its inception three years ago. In the first two months, the program had registered 400 participants, over half of whom were new to the community centre. The goal of the program is to improve well-being by getting people of all ages to be active and to promote healthy living. The program involves using a pedometer and a website where participants can log their steps and track the progress of their fellow community members. Pedometers and log books are provided as part of the program to encourage goal-setting and monitor success. There is always an online walk in progress, where a destination is chosen and everyone logs their steps and works towards the goal of reaching the particular destination. Penticton has walked to Hawaii, Las Vegas, and the most recent walk is heading to New York City. Other incentives of the program include prizes, discounts or free admission to seminars, programs and speakers in the community.

Rationale for Program

Steps Out was developed out a need to get the residents of Penticton more active and healthy. The pedometer program has been used in other cities across North America, such as Colorado, in a program called *Colorado on the Move*. The idea of bringing the program to Penticton was fueled by this, and has now spread to several other communities across the province under various names such as, *Step into Action* and *Highway to Health*. After Penticton Steps Out was developed, the BC Medical Association included the program as part of a 90-day pilot study to look at the exercise patterns of people in Penticton and Abbotsford.

Program Delivery

According to participants' feedback, one of the best features of the program is the independence it provides. There is no specific time or location when people are required to walk. They can put the pedometer on in the morning and take it off before they go to bed when they log their steps. This becomes routine and many people report checking their pedometer several times during the day to see if they have reached their "personal best" or if they have reached the 10,000 steps needed for optimum health. The destination walks act as extra motivation and contribute to a sense of community belonging because everyone is working towards the same goal.

Marketing and promotion of the program are accomplished through radio announcements and interviews, weekly columns in the newspaper and community service

announcements. Participants come from such wide ranges of ages and occupations that people often find out about the program by word-of-mouth.

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Resource Requirements

The Penticton Community Centre is the lead organization for the program. Partners include:

- B.C. Healthy Heart Society
- City of Penticton
- Edis Computers
- Interior Health Authority
- Penticton Herald
- Radio Stations (SunFM & Easy Rock)
- School District #67
- Travel Agent

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Direct costs are \$20 per person which includes a pedometer, log book, access to web log in system, promotional offers, opportunities to go on hosted walks and entry to various events hosted by the community centre and chances to win prizes
- Additional costs include member incentives such as seminars, programs, prizes and events which are often provided in-kind by partners

The program is fortunate to receive in-kind support from organizations and volunteers. When the program started three years ago, the Interior Health Authority provided a two-time grant of \$1000 each time to help the program get off the ground. Edis computers provide the web service to the City of Penticton free of charge, a saving of about \$1500 a year. Various grants along with the participant fees help sustain the program. There is a \$10 renewal fee each year for participants. The \$20 membership fee is expected to be lowered to \$10 per year starting in fall 2007. The current funding structure is not expected to cover the cost of the program; therefore, additional partnerships are being examined. There are a few staff members employed by the City of Penticton that help with the program. Many of them volunteer their time on top of this to help ensure its success.

Evaluation

The program has not been evaluated thus far, but people have shared numerous testimonials which show the impact the program has had on their lives. Many people who have never been active before are now quite involved in the program and have expressed their gratitude to the program for improving their health and well-being. Participants are constantly coming to the community centre to talk about their recent accomplishments and the number of participants continues to grow. There are records and documentation of participant numbers and website usage over the years which will be useful for an

evaluation in the future. In addition to the individualized nature of the program, the website is very user-friendly and is popular for its interactive nature and ability to motivate participants through the immediate gratification that it provides.

In 2005, the Penticton Steps Out and the City of Penticton received the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association 2005 Award for Program Excellence and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association 2005 Award of Excellence for Innovation.

Sustainability

The program could be strengthened through the following methods:

- Additional partnerships and funding
- Collaboration between walking program producers across the province
- Communication between various organizations
- Getting the medical community and other health sectors on board
- Creative sponsorship
- More publicity on the benefits of walking programs
- Strategies to recruit more low-income families and seniors
- Theme walks and events targeting various groups

In order to ensure success, the program must continue to motivate participants to lead healthy lives, target groups that are less inclined to participate, and challenge them to take control over their health by Stepping Out!

Contact Information:

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Providing Access in Sparwood

Community/City: District of Sparwood, BC

- The population is estimated at 4,000

Overview of Program

Providing Access in Sparwood is a community bus program that provides transportation to people with transportation challenges or people with low incomes so that they can access the services they need. It was developed because there was a need identified for transportation that would accommodate low income families as well as people who have difficulty accessing services. The bus service is available to all members of the community, although seniors make up the majority of the riders. Many children use the bus service during the school year as well. By providing this type of transportation, the goal of the program is to promote health and wellness in the Sparwood area.

Program Delivery

The 10-month pilot project is an initiative led by the Recreation Department in the District of Sparwood in collaboration with other organizations. The search for the right vehicle began on January 19, 2006 and the first day of regular service was at the end of April of the same year. The bus runs three mornings and two afternoons per week. It operates in all types of weather so people can always be assured that they have a mode of transportation on the days that the bus runs. The variety of bus stops and routes seems to accommodate most riders and the driver carries a cell phone so that people can call and make special requests.

Marketing and promotion of the bus service has been facilitated in part by the committee of the program, which includes people from a wide range of backgrounds who have been able to spread the word. Other strategies have included:

- Newspapers
- Posters
- Internet
- Bus stop signs
- Health fairs
- Visits to seniors' centres

Resource Requirements

The District of Sparwood Recreation Centre is the lead on the project. The program is administered by a committee. This committee is responsible for the formulation and modification of the bus route, timing, distribution of passes, budgeting and the general operation of the bus. Partners include:

- Day care centre

- Food bank
- Interior Health Authority
- Library
- Local Government
- Parents
- Schools
- Union of British Columbia of Municipalities

Before the bus was delivered, it underwent a Commercial Vehicle Safety Inspection. In addition to the pre and post safety inspections that are performed each day, the bus also undergoes two inspections each year.

Funding (Sources, Costs, and In-Kind Support)

- \$28,000 in direct costs

Funding sources include a one-time \$28,000 grant from UBCM. Grants from additional sources have also helped to keep the program financially sustainable until 2008 when BC Transit is scheduled to take over.

In the beginning, riders were charged a fare; however, this seemed to be too much money for some and there were problems with collecting the money so there is now no charge for riding the bus.

Evaluation

The use of the service has been carefully monitored and documented. The drivers have been assigned the task of recording the numbers of people getting on and off at each stop. Monthly review meetings are held to determine improvements that are needed to the service. Much of the feedback from riders is relayed through the bus drivers.

The following was used to assess the outcomes of the project:

- *The mechanical serviceability of the bus-* the bus has been independently inspected and found to be in excellent mechanical condition. It also went through a Commercial Vehicle Safety Inspection prior to delivery. The bus was also freshly painted after delivery.
- *The mechanical serviceability of the wheelchair adaptation-* The wheelchair lift is in 'like new' condition, and the wheelchair safety belt system was replaced with upgraded equipment after delivery
- *The volume and pattern of use of the public transportation service-* Use is carefully monitored and documented. This will be an ongoing exercise and will result in changes to accommodate the needs of the community
- *The sustainability of the program-* The 'Select Committee of Council' will continue to review ridership, and to explore sources of funding to sustain the operation of this important public service

The program appears to be reaching its goals by filling an important gap in the community. It is allowing people to access services that they would not otherwise be able to.

Program Sustainability

The program could be strengthened by leveraging more resources to operate the service more frequently. Financial sustainability would also help to ensure the program's continued success and could allow for improvements to the service.

Contact:

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Select Committee on Seniors' Issues

Community/Region: District of Squamish, BC

- The population is estimated at 16,000
- The program targets approximately 1,200 seniors

Overview of Program

The role of the District of Squamish Select Committee on Seniors' Issues is to advise the District Council on various items relating to seniors. Examples of specific roles of the committee are:

- Consider and evaluate seniors' issues and report back to and make recommendations to Council on those issues
- Facilitate construction of a Seniors' Resource Centre
- Provide a forum for the District of Squamish, representatives of seniors organizations and interested groups and individuals to exchange information
- Discuss issues, problems, solutions, and new initiatives and provide recommendations to Council concerning seniors and future seniors in Squamish

Committee members must be 55 years of age or older and are nominated by various seniors' organizations. There are five members at large, plus advisory members from the health authority, local and provincial governments. Members of the committee could include people from the following groups:

- Continuing Care and Mental Health Services
- District Council Members
- District of Squamish
- Parks and Recreation
- Seniors
- Seniors Housing Society
- Seniors' organizations
- Sikh Community
- Squamish Nation

Some examples of issues that are brought to Council include:

- Accessibility
- Advisory role in development of new seniors' centre
- Bike routes
- Drivers courses for seniors
- Fitness
- Long term facility care
- Seniors' games
- Street mapping

- Street safety
- Transportation

Rationale for Program

In the late 1980s, individual seniors and health unit staff formed a seniors' society to discuss items of importance relating to seniors. The idea caught on and by 1994 the committee was formed at the District level. From there, the Select Committee on Seniors' Issues developed into what it is today.

Program Delivery

The committee meets once a month to discuss various issues. The meetings are held at the District of Squamish offices.

The committee and the work of the committee is promoted and shared at seniors' fairs, the library, through newspapers and television and with the help of local organizations involved with seniors. The committee gathers information and concerns from other community members through community organizations, service agencies, volunteer groups and through Parks and Recreation.

Resource Requirements

The District of Squamish is the lead organization for the Select Committee on Seniors Issues. Partners include:

- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Province of British Columbia
- District Recreation, Parks & Tourism Department
- District of Squamish Staff and Council

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

The only funding the committee receives is via a Legislative budget for committees that includes taking minutes, field trips to seniors' facilities and programs in the Lower Mainland. The staff time, room (Council Chamber), supplies, and coffee are absorbed by the District. Staff time includes the District of Squamish employee that sits on the committee in an advisory role.

All senior positions are staffed by volunteers. Advisory staff are paid by their respective employers. There are no costs to members on the committee.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the Select Committee on Seniors' Issues is performed yearly and is performed at the discretion of the incoming mayor. There are records kept on all of the

committee actions. The committee has been able to reach many of its goals to date; however, it is still working towards the development of a new seniors' centre. The success of the committee can be attributed to the diversity and commitment of the members, from the volunteers to the District level.

Sustainability

In order to ensure success, the continued value of the committee by the District of Squamish is required. It is also important that the concerns voiced by the committee are listened to and addressed.

Contact Information:

District of Squamish
Select Committee on Seniors' Issues
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Seniors Wellness and Fitness Program

Community/Region: City of Powell River, BC

- The population is estimated at 14,000
- Including the regional district, the population is estimated at 20,000

Overview of Program

The Seniors' Wellness and Fitness Program, which started in January 2005, is a 12-week program for seniors living in the community. The program is for adults who want to increase their mobility to better handle daily tasks. Some participants have had health issues in the past that have caused them to lead a somewhat sedentary lifestyle. This program is intended to give them the opportunity and the motivation to increase their activity levels to a point that would reduce falls and assist them in daily living. The program provides participants access to a fitness program, health information and the opportunity to connect with other seniors. Participants include men and women ranging from 50 to 90 years of age.

Rationale for Program

Program staff at the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department brought forth the idea to develop a program that could improve fitness levels of older adults and address the critical issue of fall prevention. The regular fitness programs already in existence did not appear to be successful in reaching the senior population. Funding for this program was approved by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. Various aspects of the program are based on lessons learned from previous programs that have been offered at the Recreation Centre. For example, the social component and the offer of healthy snacks at the end of the activity both serve to bolster participation.

Program Delivery

The program is held at the Recreation Centre in Powell River and runs twice a week for 12 weeks (24 sessions in total) for each program session. The program sessions run from September to November and again from February to May. The duration of 12 weeks was chosen in order to provide enough time for people to recognize the benefits of improved fitness in their daily lives. The sessions consist of a mild exercise class followed by a time for socializing and healthy refreshments. The program also brings in guest speakers on topics such as home safety, falls prevention, nutrition and other topics important to seniors. The social aspect of the program is very important and long lasting friendships are often made. The final session is a party with active games and prizes. Pedometers are available for purchase in order to encourage participants to stay active. Participants generally travel up to 5 kilometers to attend the program. Under most circumstances, transportation via carpool can be arranged for those who need it. Attendance is high throughout the 12 weeks, and at the end of the program many participants move onto attend regular classes offered at the Recreation Centre, such as Easefit or Aquafit.

Marketing and promotion of the program is done through the Parks, Recreation and Culture Leisure Program Guide, newspaper advertisements, word-of-mouth and by letters and posters to physicians and physiotherapists.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization for the program is the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department in Powell River. The Vancouver Coastal Health Authority is a partner. All fitness staff are certified through British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA).

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

The main source of funding is a one-time grant from The Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. Participants pay \$1 per class (\$24 for a 12 week session). It is expected that the program fees will have to increase in the future in order to sustain it. Without higher registration fees and grant funding from the health authority, the program may not be sustainable.

There are two paid fitness instructors who lead the classes. The various guest speakers are volunteers or receive a small honorarium.

Evaluation

The program has not been evaluated. So far the program appears to be reaching its goal to motivate seniors to be active. The program is successful because it meets the needs of seniors and the price is attractive. The program is reviewed after each session (twice a year).

Sustainability

The program could be strengthened if we were able to access ongoing funding and not have to increase participant fees to cover all program costs.

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The Meadows School Project

Community/Region: District of Coldstream, BC

- The population is estimated at 10,500

Overview of Project

The Meadows School Project at Coldstream Meadows Retirement Community in Coldstream, B.C., started in 2001, and is an intergenerational bridging initiative by Vernon School District, Kidston Elementary School. The project focuses on developing a mutual respect between sixty seniors and thirty youth from 10 to 14 years. Students move into the assisted living community for two full months of immersion, with regular visitations for the balance of the year. They participate in a ministry mandated curriculum that is uniquely adapted, and includes activities with a strong focus on personal and social responsibility. Participation by the residents is voluntary, with choice of days, times, and opting out anytime. Students and seniors meld their day through sharing fitness, special events, celebrations, crafts, sing-a-longs, teatime, lunch, and the daily one or two 60 minute visitations by one or two children. At all levels, participation by both seniors and children has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic with over 95 percent of the seniors at the residence participating.

The program is divided into three focus areas: intergenerational partnerships, core government mandated curriculum and public service.

The project goals include:

- Breaking down of stereotypical thinking of both generations
- Improving mental, physical, and social health of all parties, including staff and families
- Building understanding of the “modern culture” through students sharing with seniors
- Giving opportunities for young people to develop interest in pursuing careers that involve working with seniors
- Giving students authentic opportunities to develop personal and social responsibility through daily involvement with seniors, and public service at the seniors’ residence
- Sharing of knowledge by seniors to students

Rationale for Project

The project is a response to the growing alienation which seems to be developing between generations in our society. It appears that various age groups are growing farther apart physically, socially, and emotionally, particularly the young and the aged. This physical and social alienation is limiting the chance for youth to experience caring for elders and contemplating that as a career choice. The project grew out of previous

instructional units where seniors and youth were “buddied” or interacted for short periods of time (weekly visits, special events). Although this did allow for one group to be immersed within the other, it did not provide enough time develop a “comfort zone” nor allow the groups to truly come to know each other. As a result of these concerns, the Meadows School Project was launched.

Project Delivery

The project takes place at the seniors’ residence for five weeks in the fall semester and three weeks in the spring semester (8:30 a.m-2:30 p.m. daily), with bi-weekly cross-over visits for the balance of the school year. The Retirement Community is about ten minutes away and the students travel by school or city bus to get there.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization for the project is Kidston Elementary School. Partners include:

- Coldstream Meadows Retirement Community
- Kidston Elementary School, School District #22

There are lessons and training sessions prior to the students’ arrival, for seniors, and for staff at the Retirement Community. The students are also trained in how to talk with and make connections to the residents. The project is led by a local elementary school teacher who develops and delivers the curriculum.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Direct costs are approximately \$200/year for supplies such as craft materials, special foods, cards and curriculum materials
- In-kind support includes the use of the facility and the bus, volunteer hours from parents, older students and guest speakers, and donations of materials and refreshments.

The residence and the school district share the direct cost of events. There are no major costs outside of the regular operation of the residence or the school. The minimal costs that do arise are funded by donations and fundraising efforts.

There is one paid activity director at the residence who works with the teacher to plan the events for the year. The rest of the staff at the residence do not have a specific role within the project; however they tend to look out for the students and they come to know each other by name. There are no added costs to students or residents.

Evaluation

There has been no formal evaluation to date due to lack of resources. There is an application pending with the University of Victoria, Centre for the Study of Aging, to

conduct a formal evaluation of the project. For the past six years, participants have been polled regarding attitudes towards each other and the activities, and this serves as an informal assessment of the project. Numerous testimonials and comments from seniors, students, families, the owner and staff at the residence, teachers, school board and administration, and visitors have given tremendous support to the project and its intent. Even the residents who do not participate directly in the program enjoy watching and having the students around.

Students are highly involved in self-assessment regarding their interaction with the seniors and the project goals, and all participants are given the opportunity to reflect in writing or orally on the subjective assessment of their involvement in the project on an on-going and summative basis. Records of interest and other positive outcomes of the students, residents and staff are kept.

There are several contributing factors to the success of the project:

- There is time (i.e. things are not rushed and each group can adapt to the other's timeframe on a daily and hourly basis)
- Having the children on-site makes them more like family and less like visitors
- Both seniors and youth create a rhythm together where regular patterns begin to arise, and this leads to trust, respect and caring

There is a noticeable improvement in attitudes, level of physical activity, and general demeanors of the senior participants. The project is also finding that the partnering with the seniors leads some youth to consider careers in health care, particularly in the field of geriatrics.

Sustainability

These are some of the ways that the project could be strengthened:

- Develop a procedures manual including the rationale for the intergenerational concept, administrative information, sample meeting agendas, lessons for teachers, suggestions and starting points for teachers and residences
- Create a formal curriculum package with materials (text booklets, photo charts, artifacts, novels, etc.)
- Recruit teachers and seniors' residences through either a written or audio visual format with a follow-up personal presentation
- Develop a broad based informational, recruiting and training plan if the project is to move ahead throughout the country

Some of the conditions necessary to ensure success include:

- A ministry, agency or other credible champion to commit long-term to promotion and support of the initiative.

- Draft
- Sufficient funding for on-going project development (e.g. funding to formally publish curriculum materials, development of supportive software to assist in scheduling participants as this is currently done by paper and pen. One example of this type of project development is Mary Gordon's 'Roots of Empathy' program binders.)
 - Communication, collaboration and information-sharing between participating projects to ensure utilization of best practices
 - Ensuring that materials and curriculum stay up-to-date and current in a changing society (i.e. the aging population)
 - Continued involvement from past students, residents, families and staff to gain input for new ideas and directions for the expansion of the project

There is currently a pilot project being developed that is affiliated with the Meadows School Project in New Westminster. A seniors' community recreation centre is planning to pair with a nearby high school through a course which may be potentially accredited. This is one step towards the growth of a philosophy of teaching that has the potential to break down age barriers and help both youth and older adults realize what the other has to offer.

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Tuesdays Together

Community/Region: City of Vernon, BC

- The population is estimated at 36,000

Overview of Program

The Tuesdays Together Program started in 1990 as a way for women over the age of 55 to have an opportunity to spend time with other women of a similar age. Anyone can participate in the program, regardless of their health status or cognitive and functional ability. The goal of the program is to provide a facilitated, safe environment for older women to socialize, enjoy meals, and discuss various issues going on in the community and society. Occasionally, guest speakers are brought in to discuss specific topics of interest. The focus of the group is to have fun.

Rationale for Program

Tuesdays Together developed out of a need to bring women in the community closer together while providing an opportunity for sharing and learning. The program was developed as an off-shoot of the Good Morning Program (a Peer Counseling Program). Tuesdays Together is a way for women to help women in an informal way.

Program Delivery

Participants meet twice a month for two hours each time. On the third Tuesday of the month, the women meet in the lounge of the Seniors' Drop-In Centre which is part of a subsidized seniors housing complex in the community. They then car-pool to a designated restaurant for lunch. On the fourth Tuesday of the month, the women meet at the Centre to spend time together and to discuss any topics of interest such as local community issues, politics, health and travel. Generally, participants travel up to 25km to attend the program.

Marketing and promotion of the program is accomplished through pamphlets around the community, newsletters, newspapers, invitations, and word-of-mouth. Participants are also welcome to bring friends, neighbours or newcomers in town to the Tuesday events.

Resource Requirements

Whitevalley Community Resource Centre is the lead organization for the program and is supported by:

- Gaming Commission
- United Way
- Interior Health Authority

The volunteers are trained by a staff member. The staff member also directs monthly workshops for the volunteers to provide them with networking strategies, communication skills, and a venue to understand the aging process and provide suitable programs for participants over the age of 55. Some of the volunteers have also taken a Coordinator Training Course.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Direct costs are \$100 per month for the staff member
- In-kind support is provided by volunteer facilitators and the Senior's Drop-In Centre for use of the lounge

The Interior Health Authority provides funding for seniors' programs and services run by Whitevalley Community Resources Centre, which include the wages for the paid staff member for Tuesdays Together. The Bingo Hall in Vernon also provides funding. Staff from the Whitevalley Community Resource Centre volunteer annually at the Bingo Hall and they receive ongoing funding for programs in return.

The one paid staff member organizes the program and trains the volunteers. The staff member also keeps in touch with the volunteers and the participants to see if the ladies are still attending and initiates the introduction of new participants. The volunteer facilitates the sessions and keeps records on program implementation. The participants must pay for their own lunch.

Evaluation

The program appears to be reaching its goals. The women enjoy having something organized on a monthly basis where they can meet with friends. Testimonials from participants have indicated that the women enjoy the learning that goes on when the group meets because of the age differences and the trust and acceptance that has developed. The younger seniors call the older seniors "The Survivors" because of what the older seniors have gone through and therefore can be a source of encouragement to the younger seniors.

Records are kept and the program is reviewed regularly. The volunteer facilitator reports on the following each month:

- Attendance
- New participants
- Participants that moved away
- Topics discussed
- Location of lunch

Sustainability

The program could be strengthened if participants from surrounding communities were invited to join the group. This could increase participant numbers and create more opportunities for friendships.

In order to ensure success, it is important to keep the dates of events consistent each month, have volunteers call the participants to remind them of the upcoming event, and ensure that there are volunteer drivers available to pick up those people that need a ride.

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Draft

Communities with a Population of 50,000 to 250,000 People

{insert picture}

Access to Transit

Community/Region: District of Saanich, BC

- The population is estimated at 111,000

Overview of Project

Access to Transit is a study led by the District of Saanich and funded by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) in partnership with BC Transit. The study targets seniors and those with mobility challenges. Saanich is home to a higher than average proportion of seniors and this proportion is expected to grow over the next 20 years with the aging of the baby boomers. The study was developed to support Saanich's efforts to encourage aging in place through enhancing accessibility and adaptability in housing. As part of the best practices research, the research planners looked at what standards exist in other Canadian and American cities in terms of accessible public transportation. The study started in August 2006 and was completed in February 2007.

The goals of the study were to:

- Identify design issues that affect the built environment, including public rights-of-way and private property, and commercial, office and multi-family residential buildings that impede accessibility of the conventional public transit and handyDART systems
- Develop possible design solutions that could be incorporated into the district's zoning bylaw and/or development permit guidelines and develop recommendations that could be incorporated into the district's master transportation plan, official community plan and long range planning documents

Program Delivery

The program delivery process included:

- A review of best practices in accessible design between the built environment and public transportation
- Stakeholder focus groups to identify issues and priorities associated with accessibility between home/destination and public transit (door to transit and transit to door)
- development of design principles, solutions and recommendations for both private development and the public right-of-way
- an action plan for program implementation

In total, three focus groups took place in September 2006 in various community settings. Participants were recruited by contacting the community settings listed below and asking them to find participants:

- A non-profit seniors centre
- The local university disability advocacy centre
- A retirement home

Resource Requirements

The meeting space was provided free of charge from the various settings and the focus group participants were provided with refreshments. Urban Aspects Consulting was hired to facilitate the focus groups and undertake the survey. Their experience in planning and seniors issues was a definite asset to the study.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

The main source of funding was a one-time \$10,000 grant from UBCM. Saanich planning staff provided their time in-kind. In order to complete the public infrastructure improvements, the engineering capital works budget will be accessed. The cost of improved accessibility to private developments will be born by the developer, and at the design stage, this is not expected to amount to a large sum. Development permit guidelines will be revised for improvements to new buildings. It is expected that the region will apply for grants in order to cover the other costs.

Evaluation

The study provided:

- principles of an accessible built environment
- best practices/possible solutions
- an action plan for implementing improvements

In keeping with the Action Plan, Saanich staff are evaluating the project recommendations and considering implementation strategies including amendments to bylaws and development permit guidelines, and revisions to Engineering standards, budgets and practices. The report has gone to Saanich committees and BC Transit for comment. A report will be prepared for Council 's consideration in the fall of 2007.

Sustainability

Some of the lessons learned from the study include:

- The need to hire a good consultant that is familiar with the target population and research subject
- The importance of developing an action plan to improve the success of implementation
- The importance of generating and cultivating interdepartmental support

The keys to successful implementation are:

- Getting the endorsement of staff, BC Transit, Council committees, and Council
- Adopting timely changes to policy documents, bylaws and Engineering standards to ensure uptake of recommendations (avoid having report becoming lost on the shelf)
- Amending the Saanich Strategic Plan to include Access to Transit initiatives
- Incorporating design guideline changes into the developmental permit guidelines revisions this year (as part of Official Community Plan [OCP] review)
- Seeking additional budgetary funding for retrofits and maintenance as necessary
- Amending the Engineering specifications and procedures to include Access to Transit design recommendations.

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Active Seniors Enjoying Life (ASEL)

Draft

Community/Region: City of Victoria, BC

- The population is estimated at 79,000
- Within Victoria, there are approximately 8,000 people in James Bay

Overview of Program

Active Seniors Enjoying Life (ASEL) is an aerobics class that began in 2004 and targets adults over fifty years. There are some younger participants and anyone who wants to participate is welcome. Most participants are female but there are some male participants as well. Many of the program participants live on a fixed income and are very close to the poverty level. Some have mobility limitations; therefore the exercises are performed in a chair, and include strength and cardiovascular training. Several participants are stroke survivors and their mobility, range of motion and general outlook on life has been shown to be greatly improved after having attended the exercise program. The goal of the program is to encourage seniors to participate in exercise, socialize and have fun.

Rationale for Program

The program was developed after it was recognized that there was a need for an exercise program that is specifically tailored for seniors in the community. Studies have shown that people recover from illnesses much faster if they are physically and mentally active. The program offers supervised exercise, socialization, mental and physical fitness and support to help people experience positive aging.

Program Delivery

ASEL takes place at the James Bay New Horizons Senior Activity Centre. The program runs for about two and a half hours, twice a week. The exercise component lasts about an hour. After the exercise class, there is time for socialization and refreshments. There are also activities that focus on mental stimulation which may include crosswords, puzzles and trivia. Once a week after class, a hot lunch is offered. The program runs throughout the year. Most of the participants live within one kilometer of the centre, making the program very accessible.

Every new participant is oriented and introduced to the group. The participants are very social and like to engage new people into the program and activities. All participants are monitored throughout the sessions by the staff.

The program is marketed and promoted through posters, advertising in the local community paper, in weekly bulletins, flyers, and on the calendar at the Centre. The Vancouver Island Health Authority also promotes the program through its Case Managers and associated community agencies.

Resource Requirements

The partners for the program include:

- Beckley Farm Lodge
- James Bay New Horizons Senior Activity Centre
- Vancouver Island Health Authority

Staff are certified through British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) and/or have their Activity Aide Certificate.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- \$26,000 per year in direct costs- includes wages, administrative costs and refreshments
- In-kind support- provided by volunteers, donations, James Bay New Horizons Senior Activity Centre and Beckley Farm Lodge

Funding is provided on an ongoing basis from Vancouver Island Health Authority. Equipment is purchased from donations made by people attending the program and with the help of James Bay New Horizons. The program is free to participants. The hot lunch is provided by Beckley Farm Lodge at a cost of \$5. There are two paid activity staff from Beckley Farm Lodge who organize and teach the classes. Volunteers help set up the chairs for the exercise class and the refreshments and tables for lunch.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation has been completed at this point. Beckley Farm Lodge keeps records on the program and all of the partners review the program on a regular basis. The program has been able to reach its goal of providing an exercise program for seniors where they are able to get a good workout, socialize and have fun at the same time. The success of the program can be attributed to the following factors:

- It is free to participants
- There is a social component
- It is well-organized and delivered
- There is continuity in the staff
- It fulfills a much-needed service in the community

Sustainability

It would be great if the program could be offered one additional day per week as there has been plenty of interest for this on behalf of the participants. Ongoing assessments that measure the physical improvements of participants would also be a great addition to the program. In order to ensure success, the program needs sufficient space, a safe

environment and caring staff who display genuine concern for the well-being of the participants.

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Draft

Falls Prevention Project in the Senior Population

Community/Region: Comox-Strathcona Regional District, BC

- The population is estimated at 102,000

Overview of Project

The falls prevention program is part of a 46 week (10.5 month) pilot project funded by UBCM in partnership with the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA). The project targets people aged 50 years and older who are at risk for falling by providing free programs that assess individual risk factors and provide ways to modify these risks. By targeting all 'at risk' seniors, the program is able to reach some seniors who might not otherwise join an exercise program.

Part of the program will include an educational component to help increase individual awareness about the risks of falling and how to prevent a fall from occurring. Hopefully, the project will provide an access point for individuals who may not go to the health centre or physician's office. The pilot project will aim to raise the profile of falls as predictable and preventable and facilitate community awareness by working with local media to generate interest in falls prevention.

The goals of the project are:

- To identify and recruit key stakeholders who will act as champions to increase capacity, action and sustainability of the falls prevention project
- To increase communication and collaboration between health services (VIHA), community agencies and members of the community with respect to fall prevention through meetings and joint planning
- To develop appropriate awareness and education programs within the community that decrease the risk of injury generally and specifically for those seniors who would welcome and benefit from such a service, programs and tools
- To advocate and foster engineering and design solutions that compensate for the risk factors associated with falling
- To advocate for regulation and enforcement solutions that provide appropriate risk-reduced environments
- To support the facilitation of falls prevention initiatives through other agencies in the Comox Valley

Rationale for Program

The project was developed because of the growing aging population in the Comox Valley and the need for programs and services in response to increasing health care costs. By developing community initiatives that decrease risk factors for falls, we will contribute to an overall effort to help seniors maintain their independence as they age.

Program Delivery

The development and initiation phase of the project began in January 2007. The first classes ran from June 22 - June 28, 2007. The second will run from July 2 – August 10, 2007. Other than being at risk for falling, participants must be available to attend two classes a week for six weeks. The program is currently offered at recreation centres in the area; however during the summer, options for other locations will be explored, such as community halls and long-term care facilities. Currently, some participants travel up to 20km to attend the program. Since the program is held indoors, it is not dependent on the weather and can run all year-round.

The marketing and promotion initiatives currently include:

- Posters
- Public service announcements
- Radio
- Facility road signs
- Newspapers
- Communication with key agencies
- Word of mouth

Resource Requirements

Comox Strathcona Regional District, Parks & Recreation (local government) is the lead organization for the project. Partners include:

- Community and building planners
- Family and caregivers
- Hospital discharge planners
- Independent living resource companies
- Medical supply businesses
- Members of seniors' groups
- Nurses
- Pharmacists
- Physicians
- Physical and occupational therapists
- Provincial Government
- Taxi and public transportation personnel
- Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM)
- Vancouver Island Health Authority
- Visiting homemakers
- Volunteer organizations, service clubs

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Draft**
- \$40,000 in Direct Costs – covers staffing costs, advertising, needs analysis, supplies and materials,
 - In-kind Support – volunteer hours from speakers around the community

Funding sources include a one-time grant of \$35,000 from UBCM and \$5,000 from the regional district. It is expected that the project be sustainable for the length of the pilot project. After the project is complete other initiatives will be incorporated to cover the costs so that the program can continue.

There is currently no cost to participants for the pilot sessions; however sessions run after the pilot project will likely be offered for a fee in order to recover the costs.

The classes are offered by a paid instructor. The instructor must be a registered British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) Fitness Leader with Third Age and Osteofit designations.

Evaluation

The evaluation plan includes submitting a monthly update report to the collaborative partners. The project coordinator attends the program regularly to collect information on program operations to include in the final report. The final report will be submitted at the completion of the project in November 2007 and will address the success of the established outcomes. To date, the project appears to be exceeding its goals.

Sustainability

The amount of interest in the program has been overwhelming and, as a result, more Osteofit instructors will be trained in order to strengthen the program. In order to ensure success, continuing to generate publicity about the program in the community will play a big role.

Outcomes to measure success will include:

- Improved communication and collaboration between the regional district, the health authority and the various community sectors
- An increase in community awareness and programs to assist with maintaining independence of the aging population.

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Draft

Fit Fellas

Community/Region: City and District of North Vancouver and District of West Vancouver

- The combined population is estimated at 181,000

Overview of Program

Fit Fellas is a fitness program offered at the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre that targets senior men over 60 years old. All male members of the seniors' centre are welcome to participate in the program. Fit Fellas has been running for 15 years and has grown and developed a great deal over this period. The goals of the program are to maintain or increase levels of fitness among participants and to facilitate social connectedness.

Rationale for Program

It is well established in the literature that regular physical activity enhances physical and mental health. The Fit Fellas program was developed by the previous Recreation Director at the centre as a way to get men involved in group fitness. It was recognized that there was a lack of fitness programs targeting senior men in the community. The program was developed as a way to fill this gap.

Program Delivery

The fitness classes are led by male instructors and participants are able to attend two or three classes per week. The classes, however, are not offered on a drop-in basis. Participants must sign up for them in advance. Participants come from all over the North Shore; therefore, some people must travel up to 20km to attend the sessions. In addition to the weekly sessions, the leaders of the program also organize social activities throughout the year, including a hike on Bowen Island, a fall golf tournament, and an annual Christmas party. There is also a fundraising aspect to the program, where money is raised for prostate cancer, since many participants have had experience with the disease.

Due to the popularity of the program (there are currently 175 participants), active marketing and promotion has been put on hold until the new community centre with a larger gymnasium is built and can accommodate more people.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization is the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre.

Instructors that teach the fitness classes are encouraged to be trained as group fitness leaders through the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA);

however, this is not mandatory. The centre will also pay for volunteer instructors to take courses.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Approximately \$500 per year in direct costs- covers the volunteer instructors' training cost and substitute instructors' wages
- In-kind support - volunteer instructors hours and use of facility

Fit Fellas participants pay \$35 for 12 sessions on top of their \$25 membership fee to the activity centre. These fees, the minimal direct costs and the in-kind support allow the program to be financially sustainable.

Evaluation

Program evaluation consists of tracking participation rates and verbal feedback received from participants. The program is reaching its goals and the success of the program can be attributed to the volunteers. The program is reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Sustainability

The program could be strengthened if there were more instructors so that the large classes could be divided into smaller ones. This would allow participants to get more individual attention from the instructor and facilitate more personal interaction among the participants. Finding volunteer instructors has been difficult; therefore, reducing class size is not yet possible. Continued involvement from volunteers is required in order to ensure future success of the program.

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Get Ready for Grad Event

Community/Region: City of Coquitlam, BC

- The population is estimated at 119,000

Overview of Program

The Get Ready for Grad Event is an inter-generational initiative where seniors teach ballroom dancing to high school students before their graduation. The students receive a lesson in the waltz, the cha-cha and the jive. They also learn how to tie a necktie, escort their dates, use proper table etiquette and demonstrate some old-fashioned social grace. Seniors share their own experiences with the youth who in turn give the seniors an update on how things are done now.

The target audience is seniors who are 50 years of age and over and the graduating students from Centennial Secondary School (aged 17-18). The event is open to both males and females in both target groups. The first time the event took place was in May 2006; it was repeated again in May 2007. It is timed to run in conjunction with BC Youth Week and a couple of weeks before the Graduation Dinner and Dance. Seniors were recruited as volunteers for the inter-generational initiative. Their skills, backgrounds, strengths, mobility, interests and proximity to the event site were matched for a “best fit.”

The goal of the event is to give seniors and youth a new outlook on learning and demonstrate the value of lifelong learning in a shared experience. Some other objectives of the program include:

- Fostering new friendships/associations and shared interests amongst seniors and youth
- Building connections through learning and increasing mutual understanding and respect between older and younger generations
- Reducing fear and anxiety between generations
- Increasing self-esteem and confidence of seniors and youth, as well as their feelings of being valued and contributing citizens who can make a difference in the community
- Stimulating and enhancing the mental abilities of seniors in order to increase independence and quality of life
- Raising awareness and understanding of youth who may not have meaningful relations with seniors as to the breadth of knowledge, life experience and vitality of seniors

Rationale for Program

The program was developed in order to build stronger community connections across a recognized age gap. This project harnesses and shares the life experiences, wisdom, knowledge and skills of seniors by giving them the opportunity to interact with a younger

generation. By being in the role of a mentor/tutor, seniors are able to share their talents and life skills and participate in a very important milestone in a youth's life.

The program was based on the premise that inter-generational sharing of a common life experience would benefit both of the groups involved. Research has shown that seniors and youth are able to interact and learn from each other, and even more so when in a fun environment.

Program Delivery

The event is held once a year and takes place in the school gymnasium so as to accommodate all the youth and to provide enough space for the dancing component. The event is an afternoon function that is about two to three hours in length. The school is across the street from the adult recreation centre where the seniors' society operates. Refreshments are provided and prizes are given out such as free tuxedo rentals and hair-dressing certificates.

There are efforts made to increase involvement of both target audiences. Ways to encourage more participants from both age groups are discussed throughout the year. It has been found that the best way is to highlight the event in a newsletter following the event and showcasing photos with the hope of encouraging and increasing participation for the following event. The event is also promoted in the community centre's newsletter as well as the school's daily bulletin and public announcements, through advertising and press releases in the local newspaper.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization is the Dogwood Seniors Society, in conjunction with the adult recreation centre. The Dogwood Seniors Society is a non-profit society operating out of the Dogwood Pavilion which is a public recreation centre for adults aged 50 and over. It is operated by the Coquitlam Leisure and Parks Services. Other partners include the School District and the City of Coquitlam.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Direct costs include \$30/hour for the dance instructor and approximately \$100 for the refreshments
- Staff time is provided in-kind for the preparation beforehand and on the actual day of the event

The program relies on a combination of volunteers and paid staff (from the school and Dogwood Pavilion). There is no charge to participate in the event. Assistance is provided from the Dogwood Seniors Society for the sponsorship of 2 tickets to the grad dinner and dance. The City of Coquitlam and local merchants provide support through donations of miscellaneous prizes to be given away at the event.

Evaluation

The program was presented as one of the initiatives in Dogwood Pavilion's 2006-2007 New Horizons Grant Final Report on the "Seniors Connect Coquitlam" program. The Get Ready for Grad Event has been very successful. The feedback from volunteers, participants and school administrators was very positive. The turnout from the students was phenomenal as over 80 students have attended the event each year. The program is reviewed each year to see how it can be improved and recruit more participants.

The program is successful because it provides an opportunity for a meaningful inter-generational experience where both the youth and seniors are able to gain something positive from the event.

Sustainability

In order to ensure success, early recruitment of senior volunteers, advance notice to the school at the start of the school year for their annual calendar, and increased promotion and marketing as to the benefits and fun in attending the event is required.

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Greenhouse Project

Community/Region: Town of Creston, BC

- The population is estimated at 5,200
- The size of the communities serviced is approximately 13,000

Overview of Project

The UBCM Greenhouse Project began as a one-year pilot project in April 2006 and is still ongoing. It has three complimentary programs which are the Greenhouse Program, the Meals Program and the Shopping Program. The purpose of the project is to stimulate the social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of seniors. The Greenhouse Program is open to people of all ages and abilities, although seniors comprise the largest group. The Meals and Shopping Programs target seniors who are isolated and who will benefit from programs that encompass nutrition, physical fitness, and social activities.

The *Greenhouse Program* involves seniors assisting the greenhouse coordinator and other greenhouse users (people with disabilities, in transition, gardeners and volunteers) to plan, prepare soils, seed, plant, water, fertilize, control pests and harvest crops. Other activities include propagating, forcing bulbs and arranging flowers. The produce is taken home by participants, used to prepare food, or donated to the local food bank.

The *Meals Program* involves a bus that picks up seniors and transports them to the activity centre where they are able to engage in activities such as meal preparation, eating, tai chi, craft making, greenhouse work, or mental activities such as puzzle solving. In addition, excursions are planned twice a month and include bus rides to the lake, the elementary school, or tours to new businesses. In the *Shopping Program*, seniors are provided transportation to food outlets and are assisted in purchasing low-cost, nutritional, appropriate and easily prepared dietary items. Following this, participants are driven home and assisted with appropriate food storage.

Rationale for Project

The program was developed after the realization that many seniors in the community are undernourished for various reasons, including lack of ability to shop, lack of enthusiasm to cook and eat in isolation, or lack of means to buy nutritious foods.

The project is based on evidence collected by the Ministry of Health that shows that preventative processes such as social interaction, appropriate nutrition and physical activity helps seniors remain in their homes for a longer period of time, delaying the high financial and social cost of housing seniors in extended care. There is also evidence that horticulture is therapeutic to all age levels and that community food production adds to the social structure of a community. Research was done on other community greenhouses in the US and the Yukon showing the benefits that a greenhouse program such as this can have.

Project Delivery

Each senior participates in the greenhouse program for approximately six hours per week. The meals program can be attended anywhere from one to four times a week and requires about six hours to complete each day. The shopping program runs for five hours, one day a week. The participants have to travel anywhere between half a mile to 5 miles to attend the various programs. All three programs can be run regardless of season or weather because they all take place indoors.

Marketing and promotion of the programs are done mainly through word of mouth, presentations to organizations, making connections with other projects or programs, advertising on the radio or local newspaper, and through workshop advertisements. Other efforts are made to fully engage with the target audience as well. One way that this is accomplished is through liaising with community health care assessors. Referrals are also often made from the public health sector. Another important way of engaging with the target audience is by performing regular needs assessments.

Resource Requirements

The Town of Creston is the lead organization for the program but also has many partners from the following areas:

- Assisted living facilities
- Community Resource centres
- Employment Services
- Local college
- Local craft store
- Local Growers
- Provincial Government
- Retirement community/management company
- Seniors Community Centre
- Union of Municipalities of British Columbia (UBCM)

The people who deliver the workshops have to be qualified and knowledgeable in the subject. The greenhouse manager and coordinator and any consultants are also required to be qualified to deliver the program.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-kind Support)

- \$25,000 in direct costs– covers 22 staff hours per week, heating of the greenhouse, potting supplies and materials
- In-kind support- volunteer hours for supervision, planting, weeding, watering, helping with harvesting and sales; donated pots, plants and other materials

Funding sources include UBCM, the local college and Direct Access (Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch in BC). The three programs are supplemented by fundraising and grant writing in the hopes of adding more services to the programs.

The costs of the program are discussed with the families prior to enrollment. Financial status is discussed at this time and it is decided whether the person can afford to pay. If it is decided that they cannot afford to pay, the services are offered for free. Most of the seniors are not able to pay full program costs (about \$3000 per year); however, they or their families are sometimes able to pay a portion. For seniors who are able pay the full program costs, it is \$4 for a meal and \$15 per month for transportation. For the greenhouse program, services are free of charge for seniors. Community members pay \$25 for soil and pots and half a bench in the greenhouse. All participants plant extra flats for produce for the local food bank as well as for the meal and shopping programs. In addition to receiving strong community support through donations of funds and materials, the programs have over 100 volunteers that have continued to make them possible. All participants volunteer their time to help with weeding and watering.

Evaluation

The outcomes have been evaluated against the performance measures outcomes, including: number of people attending, number of meals generated, amount of produce grown and distribute, success of each vegetable grown. All three programs met and exceeded their goals. The greenhouse manager and participants are continually experimenting with new planting projects, new methods and the needs of new participants joining the program; therefore there is a constant review of what worked and how it can be sustained.

Sustainability

The program can be strengthened by the following methods:

- More planning and education
- Planning on a larger scale
- Involving more action-oriented community groups in the planning process
- Leveraging more opportunities to work with partners

The following are ways that the program can ensure future success:

- Continue to foster collaboration with local partners
- Promote ongoing partnerships and interaction with organizations involved with seniors (i.e. seniors' housing and community centres)
- Maintain or increase volunteer support
- Maintain or increase fundraising support

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Draft

Healthy Aging Series

Community/Region: City of Burnaby, BC

- The population is estimated at 205,000

Overview of Program

The Healthy Aging Series was initiated by the Burnaby Services for Seniors Society (BSSS). BSSS is a partnership of seniors, government and non-governmental service providers that meet to discuss programs, collaborate and address the needs and issues of seniors in the community. The Healthy Aging Series is an educational program aimed at meeting the needs of Burnaby seniors and community members by disseminating information and providing free workshops. Topics vary widely around aging and healthy living, including downsizing, end of life, representation agreements, emotional wellbeing, laughter yoga, brain gym and active living. BSSS has been in operation for more than 25 years and the Healthy Aging Series was created in 2003. The Series targets seniors, adult children and caregivers; however, anyone who is interested can attend the events as there are no registration requirements. The purpose of the Healthy Aging Series is to ensure that BSSS provides education to the community that is timely, cost effective and accessible to all who live and work in Burnaby.

Rationale for Program

The community education series was initiated by BSSS due to community requests for education to help caregivers provide care. When the Series started, it had a focus on caregivers. From 1999-2003, BSSS received funding for a Caregiver Education Series. During this time, the Caregiver Education Project provided annual workshops and developed caregiver videos as well as mobility and nutrition booklets. The community education requests continued as there was a lack of healthy aging education programming. In 2003, the focus changed to healthy aging due to increasing research and attention on healthy aging and chronic disease prevention as well as the changing demographics and community profile of seniors in Burnaby. The positive response from participants was overwhelming and the Healthy Aging Series soon became an expectation in the community.

Program Delivery

The Healthy Aging Series takes place at one of four seniors centres across Burnaby. There are three to four events a year (one to two in the fall and two in the spring), each lasting about an hour and a half. The attendance varies according to the subject as well as the time of day and location. The number of participants at an event ranges from 5 to 150 depending on the topic, although attendance seems to be growing with every event. Evaluations completed by participants indicate that the events are easily accessible by foot, bus or car. The Series aims to be interactive and to allow time for questions and answers. Participants also have access to hard copy resources on all of the topics. There are also refreshments and prizes at the events.

Marketing and promotion of the Healthy Aging Series is accomplished through newspapers, newsletters, posters and emails.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization for the Healthy Aging Series is the Burnaby Services for Seniors Society, a non-profit society that provides a formal venue through which Burnaby seniors, agencies, groups and institutions whose services are focused on seniors can review and seek collaborative solutions to seniors' issues. This is carried out in multiple ways including education, advocacy, resource sharing and development of resources.

Partners include:

- Burnaby Falls Prevention
- Burnaby Hospice Society
- Burnaby Meals on Wheels
- Burnaby Parks & Recreation & Cultural Services
- Burnaby Seniors Outreach
- Citizen Support Services
- City of Burnaby
- Community Home Support Services
- Community Members
- Fraser Health, Burnaby Preventive Services
- Good Riddance Professional Organizing
- Mulberry Retirement Residence
- Network of Burnaby Seniors (NOBS)
- New Vista Society
- Residences at Belvedere
- Rideau Manor

Program organization is provided by BSSS committee membership. Some members are from agencies providing services to seniors and others are volunteers. In order to be on the committee, members should have an interest in seniors' health issues and have knowledge of the Burnaby community.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Approximately \$1500 in direct costs- includes refreshments, prizes, speakers and poster printing
- Approximately \$5500 in in-kind support- includes advertising, office supplies, work and storage space, and volunteer time from BSSS and community members

The main source of funding is provided annually by The News Leader (community newspaper), The Mulberry (retirement residence) and in-kind support from Burnaby Services for Seniors Society. Access to the Healthy Aging Series is free. The Healthy

Ageing Series is financially sustainable because of the ongoing funding sources and in-kind support that it receives.

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Evaluation

After each Healthy Aging session, there is an evaluation that includes questions about the current session and also about future sessions. The annual series is organized with these needs and suggestions in mind.

The Healthy Aging Series is meeting its goals and the attendance has exceeded expectations with the last attendance count being 147. The evaluations are confirming that the program is meeting the community's education needs. The program is reviewed each fall during an annual planning meeting.

The success can be attributed to the committed members of BSSS who initiated and continued the program over the years. The programs are 'close to home' as they are provided in all four quadrants of Burnaby. Good publicity prior to the program is also one of the reasons for its success. The community partnerships that have been developed over the last 25 years are invaluable to the success of BSSS, and as a result, to the Healthy Aging Series as well.

Sustainability

The Healthy Aging Series could be strengthened by increasing community and agency participation. To ensure success, BSSS must continue to network with community agencies to sustain and promote partnerships and collaboration.

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Healthy Community Network for Seniors

Community/Region: Oceanside Community, BC

- The population is estimated at 50,000
- The Oceanside Community consists of the City of Parksville, the Town of Qualicum Beach, and the rural regional districts of Nanoose, Coombs, Errington, and Bowser

Overview of Project

The Healthy Community Network for Seniors is an ongoing resource targeting all seniors 55+ through many types of services. The project also targets isolated seniors and those with lack of transportation. The 11-month pilot project funded by UBCM started in January 2007 and will finish in November 2007.

The main goal of this project is to promote and improve the health, well being and safety of seniors in the Parksville community.

The features of the project include:

- Health promotion services for seniors delivered by trained volunteers
- Focus on health-related needs/risk factors and prevention, including dementia, neglect, self-neglect, medication mis-use and elder abuse
- Workshops for seniors on health, well-being and safety
- The development of an inclusive, effective and sustainable Seniors Advisory Network for the community
- Information sharing of community health promotion needs and services as they relate to seniors
- An analysis of all health promotion services for seniors
- Identification and documentation of best practices as well as gaps and duplications of services for seniors
- A website profiling the health promotion services available for seniors
- A PowerPoint presentation profiling the health promotion needs and services in the community that will be presented to various groups involved with seniors

Rationale for Project

Qualicum Beach has the highest proportion of seniors per capita in all of Canada and the population of the Oceanside community consists of over 50 percent of people over the age of 60. These statistics highlight the need for an emphasis on services for seniors in order to keep them as healthy as possible (Regional District of Nanaimo, 2007).

Project Delivery

The workshops, meetings, presentations and other services take place in various communities and settings which make it easier for people to attend based on their

location. The website is an important tool and can be viewed wherever there is internet access. Once people hear about the project, they can refer to the website to get more information about the available services.

Other marketing and promotion initiatives have been done through Shaw Cable, links on community partners' websites, a bi-monthly community newsletter to seniors groups, local newspapers as well as brochures at the local health centre. PowerPoint presentations are regularly advertised to various seniors groups, and seniors centres also play a large role in spreading the word.

Resource Requirements

The City of Parksville (local government) is the lead organization for the project. Partners include:

- Community Response Network
- Elder College
- Local government
- Local community resource centres and associations
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Seniors Activity centres
- Seniors Services Organizations
- Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM)
- Vancouver Island Health Authority

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-kind Support)

- \$24,700 in direct costs
- In-kind support – volunteer hours, accounting services, meeting space, guidance and advice, use of workshop equipment, technical support, guest speakers and trainers, advertising, supplies, and program development

The main funding source is a one-time grant of \$24,700 from UBCM. Funding from other sources will be required to sustain the program after 11 months. The Community Response Network has been working with community partners on a long-term sustainability plan. This includes funding from individuals, service clubs, business/corporate and government funding.

All of the programs are volunteer-driven, with the volunteers being trained by the appropriate partner. There is one project coordinator who receives an honorarium. The current funding structure allows for all of the programs and services to be free of charge for participants.

Evaluation

The implementation plan included documentation regarding the following questions as part of the evaluation:

- What resources are needed to make your project operate?
- What activities will take place during the project?
- How many and what kind of products and/or services will be generated from these activities?
- What will happen as a result of your project?

In addition to the implementation plan, the creation and distribution of a project report will also be part of the evaluation. The plan is also to distribute a data analysis to collaborating partners, agencies and community members. The Executive Council for the project holds bi-monthly meetings with collaborating partners to discuss the progress of the project. Surveys will be distributed four and six months into the project to gain even more insight into how well the project is going.

So far it appears that the project has been successful in reaching its goals. The PowerPoint presentation and website have been created, newsletters are being created and distributed on a regular basis and the community is becoming more aware of the project and the new services that are available. The success of the project can be attributed to the collaboration with partners and the involvement of seniors as both volunteers and trainers.

Project Sustainability

The main conditions necessary to ensure success are continued collaboration and partnership and dialogue with key stakeholders. The project could be strengthened through the following methods:

- Additional support from local government
- Additional funding from local foundations, service clubs and in-kind donations
- Increased senior involvement in planning and delivery of programs and services

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Home Safety Check Program

Community/Region: Greater Vernon Area, BC

- The population is estimated at 47,000

Overview of Program

The Home Safety Check (HSC) Program began in 2002 and was developed by the North Okanagan Falls Prevention Project (NOFPP) as one component of a national Falls Prevention Program. The aim of the HSC Program is to provide falls prevention information, support and follow-up to seniors over 65 years of age living in the community. This will enable and empower seniors to overcome barriers and make changes in their homes that will reduce the risk of having a fall.

The main objective of the program is to assist participants in identifying the presence of hazards in their home which may increase the risk of having a fall. Having identified these hazards, HSC peer volunteers assist the senior participants to identify three falls prevention priorities to undertake to change over the following three months. This is important so that the initial support provided is translated into actual risk reduction.

There are five distinct parts to the HSC Program:

Part 1: Participant Referral, Intake and Introduction (Responsibility of Program Coordinator)

Part 2: The Initial HSC (Responsibility of HSC Volunteer)

Part 3: One Week Follow-up Phone Call (Responsibility of Program Coordinator)

Part 4: One-Month Evaluation Phone Call (Responsibility of Program Coordinator)

Part 5: The Three-Month Follow-up HSC Phone Call (Responsibility of Program Coordinator)

Rationale for Program

Due to a high proportion of seniors living in the North Okanagan region, there was a need recognized for a program addressing falls prevention.

Program Delivery

The program takes place in seniors' homes where their home undergoes a Home Safety Check by one of the HSC Volunteer Inspectors or the Program Coordinator. The Inspectors go to seniors' homes to perform the initial HSC at a prearranged time between Monday and Thursday.

The Program Coordinator plays a key role in promoting the HSC Program among potential participants, health care professionals, and support services for seniors.

Participants are referred to the program by local health care professionals or through self-referral. Some of the specific ways the program is promoted include:

- Formal meetings with Public Health Nurses responsible for Community Care Programs
- Information sessions to all referral services including various divisions of the Interior Health Authority
- Information sharing with health advocacy groups
- Information tables at flu vaccine clinics
- Physician office visits
- Posters and brochures in the community
- Presentations to local seniors' organizations and clubs

Resource Requirements

The lead organization for the HSC Program is the Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan which is a non-profit society. Partners include:

- General Practitioners
- Interior Health Authority Home Support Programs
- Local Pharmacists
- Seniors Information and Resource Bureau
- Seniors Organizations

Training programs are in place for all volunteers. The Program Coordinators should have experience in managing community service and some expertise with seniors, and preferably should be seniors themselves.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Approximately \$25,000 in direct costs
- In-kind support is provided by the HSC volunteers

Funding is provided by the Interior Health Authority and must be approved on an annual basis. Some funding is also provided through donations. There is no cost to participants. There is one part-time paid Program Coordinator (18 hours per week). Workshops and information fairs are run by volunteers.

Evaluation

All participants complete a Home Safety Check Participant Information Form at the end of the initial HSC. After a week, participants are contacted and asked to provide their feedback on the Home Safety Check experience. Participants receive another follow-up phone call one month after the initial HSC to identify what changes the participant has

made. The final follow-up, either through a home visit or a phone call, takes place three-months after the initial HSC. All participants are asked to complete a program evaluation form at that time. Volunteers are also asked to complete a Volunteer Evaluation Form after each Home Safety Check.

Data collected from participants' feedback and evaluations provide valuable statistical information about the program. They also identify strengths and opportunities for improvement. In addition to the evaluation forms, the program is reviewed on an annual basis as part of the funding requirement.

The program consistently reaches its goals. The program is successful because of its peer-led structure. Since the volunteers are seniors themselves, they have the empathy and understanding to deal with other seniors. This program is also well-promoted and involved with seniors' events in the community.

Sustainability

The program could be strengthened if there were more paid staff to find, train and sustain volunteers. Other conditions necessary to ensure success include:

- Comprehensive follow-up and evaluation
- Efficient, well-organized and confidential administration
- Having seniors involved in the development of the program
- High quality training and support for volunteers
- Peer education and peer modeling

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Men's Cooking Class

Community/Region: City and District of North Vancouver

- The combined population is estimated at 128,000
- The community serviced is approximately 25,000 people

Overview of Program

The Men's Cooking Class at Parkgate Community Centre targets senior men from the community. The current group is made up of men aged 70-80 years old. These men may be living alone, isolated, or they may just be interested in learning how to cook. The program involves basic skill-building in the kitchen, interactive preparation, and finishes off with eating together as a group. The program started in 2006 and has run twice before at the centre; it is now running for the third time. The goals of the program are to facilitate fun and socialization among participants.

Rationale for Program

The program was developed because there was an interest among the senior men at the community centre for a cooking program just for them. This men-only approach creates a friendly and non-intimidating atmosphere where men with little cooking experience can learn the basics and even more. At the same time, they can meet other men with similar interests.

Program Delivery

The content of the program is constantly being adapted to meet the needs of the participants. By catering to the group, it allows the participants to learn at their own pace and get what they want or need out of it. The program runs two evenings a week at the community centre and participants must provide their own transportation. For the most part, the participants live in close proximity to the centre. Once they arrive, the participants congregate in the seniors' centre kitchen. This is where the fun takes place!

Marketing and promotion of the program take place in various newspapers in the area, the recreation department in the city, as well as through the centre's website and at the community centre itself.

Resource Requirements

Parkgate Community Centre is a non-profit society and is the lead organization for the program. Its partners are the North Vancouver Recreation Commission, the City of North Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver, three organizations striving to deliver high quality programs on the North Shore.

The instructor of the program must have Food Safe Certification.

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Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- The direct costs are about \$8 per person per session- the participants pay this fee and it covers the cost of the instructor and the cost of groceries

The program is financially sustainable as long as participants are willing to pay the fee. Careful budgeting and shopping is required in order to keep this fee as low as possible and keep the program running within the budget. Currently, there is only one paid staff member (the instructor); however, volunteers are always welcome to help out!

Evaluation

The program has not been formally evaluated; however, to date it appears to be reaching its goals. It is evident that the program is successful because the participants keep showing up and they seem to be enjoying the social aspect of it. A binder of information is kept about the program, including records of program implementation and utilization. It is expected that the program will begin to undergo regular reviews in the future.

Sustainability

The program could be strengthened if there were at least one volunteer to help out. Also, a stronger marketing and promotion angle would help in getting more people to participate, ensuring that the program remains at capacity. The program would not be able to continue if there was not enough interest. A knowledgeable and flexible instructor is also important in order to adapt to the needs of the seniors.

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North Shore Keep Well Society

Community/Region: District of West Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, and the City of North Vancouver BC

- The combined population is estimated at 181,000

Overview of Society

The North Shore Keep Well Society is a non-profit society offering various health programs and services to men and women over the age of 55 throughout the North Shore community. The goal of Keep Well is to give people the tools they need to take responsibility for their health in order to “keep well” and to improve quality of life. Examples of programs and services include:

- Blood pressure checks
- Fitness classes
- Guest speakers
- Information regarding various social events and activities going on in the community
- Nutrition consultations
- Peer support
- Pharmacy consultations
- Shoulder, hand and foot massages
- Weight checks

The services offered at each site vary depending on the availability of service providers such as nutritionists and pharmacists. Program participants come from a variety of cultural and economic backgrounds. Staff and volunteers do their best to make the experience enjoyable for the participants by fostering a friendly environment where people feel comfortable. Refreshments are provided at many of the locations. The program started over 20 years ago and has been developed and refined over the years to what it is today.

Rationale for Program

The premise behind the program is that individuals have a responsibility to maintain and enhance their own health and that with the right support and encouragement more older people would be able to lead satisfying and healthy lives.

Program Delivery

The programs and services provided by the North Shore Keep Well Society are offered weekly at each of eight locations across the North Shore. The programs are held in the mornings and run for approximately two hours. Locations include community centres, seniors' centres and a seniors' residential complex. Most participants travel between one

and three kilometers to attend the program. The program is offered eleven months a year, from September through July.

Marketing and promotion of the North Shore Keep Well Society is accomplished through brochures in community centres, advertisements in local newspapers, word-of-mouth, and other networking methods.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization is the North Shore Keep Well Society. Partners include:

- City of North Vancouver
- Community centres
- District of North Vancouver
- District of West Vancouver
- Seniors' centres
- Seniors' residential complex
- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

All staff and volunteers have training in their respective areas. For example, the volunteers that do blood pressure checks are retired Registered Nurses, the pharmacist consultants are retired pharmacists and the people giving massages are either registered massage therapists or have been trained by licensed masseuses. There are also dietitians, occupational therapists and physiotherapists that volunteer with the Society as well.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Approximately \$83,000 per year in direct costs
- In kind support includes, but is not limited to, the free use of space at the eight centres, volunteer time, and reduced fees for services.

The North Shore Keep Well Society has an on-going service contract with Vancouver Coastal Health Authority where \$72,000 in funding is provided each year. Without this service contract, the program would not be financially sustainable. The program also receives a minimum of \$11,000 in grants and donations each year. The funding contributes to the salaries for three part-time staff, the office space, printing and various supplies needed for the programs and services. The program relies heavily on volunteers and in-kind support. There are approximately 130 volunteers across all sites. Half the locations have one or two volunteer site coordinators who organize the other volunteers and who ensure that the programs run smoothly each week. The sites where the programs take place offer their space free of charge. Participants pay a \$2 membership fee at the beginning of the year and this allows them to attend all of the programs for the year. The membership fees contribute minimally (about 1 percent) to the financial sustainability of the program.

Evaluation

The North Shore Keep Well Society is currently being evaluated. A research study began in Spring 2007; the data have been collected and are currently being analyzed.

Documentation is kept on all of the services and programs offered and attendance is taken at each location in order to track utilization rates. In addition to an Annual General Meeting, board meetings are held each month where the program is reviewed. There is also a more formal review that takes place every couple of years.

The program is meeting its main goal, and the evaluation that is being performed will likely confirm its success. The program is successful in part because of the competent and dedicated board, staff, and volunteers. The success of the program can also be attributed to its ability to reach a large number of older adults. There are approximately 300 participants in total that attend the programs at the eight sites each week.

Sustainability

The program could be strengthened with more training, support and recognition of volunteers. In order to ensure success, the goals of the program must be made clear to the board members, partners, staff and volunteers so that all may pull in the same direction. An adequate budget is also necessary for success.

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North Shore Seniors Go Bus

Draft

Community/Region: City and District of North Vancouver and District of West Vancouver

- The combined population is estimated at 181,000

Overview of Program

The North Shore Seniors Go Bus is a specialized community shuttle for seniors that stops at seniors and community centres, senior housing, drugstores, grocery stores, medical centres, and other service locations that are important to seniors. Although the bus operates on a route and schedule, it is flexible in that it allows for individual door-to-door pick-up and drop-off.

The program began as a pilot project funded mainly by Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) and ran for 23 weeks, from June to November 2006; however, it has been able to continue since the end of the project. It targets people over 65, especially those with limited transportation options. If a person is younger than 65 and wishes to ride the bus because of health reasons or isolation, they are welcome to do so. Many of the users come from subsidized and assisted living arrangements and benefit a great deal from this free service. The bus also aids people who are not able to use public transportation and may need door-to-door assistance.

The goals of the program are to:

- Support seniors to live independently and age in place in their community
- Provide an attractive, fun, educational and social transportation service through on-board ‘conductor’
- Connect seniors to more services and programs in their local neighbourhoods and improve their quality of life
- Increase collaboration between tri-municipal service agencies and the municipalities
- Develop links and increase collaboration with HandyDART
- Test the viability and effectiveness of a North Shore shuttle bus service for consideration by TransLink and other community organizations

Rationale for Program

Community agencies and older adults agree that one of the biggest barriers to accessing services is transportation. Seniors need to be connected to social services that promote physical and mental health, social connections, and aging in place.

The program started because of an opportunity for a UBCM grant. The thinking was that the grant could make an impact on transportation. This is a high priority for North Shore seniors who have difficulty negotiating the hills and rainy weather.

Another reason for the program was to reduce isolation among older adults and increase access to important services with a more accessible service than currently offered by either TransLink or HandyDART.

Program Delivery

The bus runs three days per week in three different areas of North and West Vancouver. The bus runs regardless of weather conditions, and in fact, it is probably used more during poor weather conditions.

The program is marketed and promoted through the following methods:

- Posters
- Flyers
- Posted schedules
- Press releases
- Newsletter articles
- Web articles
- Newspaper coverage
- Promotion of service at seniors centres, programs, and housing

Resource Requirements

Silver Harbour is a non-profit seniors' recreation centre and charitable organization and the lead on the project. Partners include:

- Local charitable organizations
- Local senior centre
- Local residential care facility
- Union of British Columbia of Municipalities
- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

The only training required is for the bus driver, who must have a class 4 license and a clean driving history. The current bus driver was chosen because of his substantial experience driving for seniors, especially frail seniors.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- \$77,000 in direct costs
- In-kind support – volunteer hours, reduced bus rental rate

The main funding source is a one-time grant of \$34,000 from UBCM. Other funding sources include donations from various charitable organizations as well as \$15,000 from the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority.

Although the bus is free of charge for riders, donations are very much appreciated.

From the start of the pilot project, the committee began planning for ongoing financial sustainability. Currently, the service is not financially sustainable without donations and grant monies. The program has faced many challenges in securing permanent funding; however, it has still managed to operate on various small grants. Additional funding was able to keep the program running through summer 2007; however, the program is now looking to several large agencies in order to assist with ongoing funding.

Evaluation

The planning process and major milestones were documented. Project implementation data and accomplishments were recorded, including the number of riders on each day that the service was offered. The next annual review will be this fall.

In the last month of the pilot project (November 2006), riders were asked to fill out a survey. In total, 41 riders were surveyed on how they heard about the service, their usage of the service, as well as their likes and dislikes about the service.

Comments collected from the surveys indicated that the Go Bus:

- Helped to support activities of daily living
- Helped seniors continue living in their current location (particularly those more isolated)
- Provided opportunities for socialization and meeting new people
- Riders were able to access more services than before, as well as their usual service more often

Some reasons for the success include having an excellent driver who is helpful, well known to local seniors, and good at his job. The program also works well because it is offered at no cost and because it goes door-to-door while still having the efficiency of a route.

Other measures of success included:

- Increased collaboration between agencies, including municipal planning departments
- Evidence has not yet shown changes in attitudes towards HandyDART
- The service was shown to be useful, appreciated and administratively viable

Program Sustainability

The program could be strengthened if it had more days of service and it could ensure success if it had sustainable and reliable funding.

Some of the lessons learned from the project are the following:

- Draft
- A routed and scheduled service produces great operating efficiencies but flexibility is required in order to support seniors' use of services
 - It is difficult with a part-time service to include all seniors' lifestyle needs in considering routing and scheduling, with hard decisions required (some neighbourhoods have no Go Bus service)
 - The skill of the driver in operating the vehicle safely and comfortable as well as his expertise in assisting seniors and promoting the service to them dramatically increased the success of the project
 - It has been difficult to secure large pieces of funding to continue the service, although community agencies are very forthcoming with smaller amounts of funding
 - The actual operating period of 5 months was insufficient to generate a set of reliable recommendations to TransLink as response to the service is still growing and changing

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Seniors Assisting Seniors

Community/Region: Greater Vernon Area, BC

- The population is estimated at 47,000
- It is estimated that 20.7 percent of the population are over 65 years of age compared to the 13.7 percent average in the rest of BC

Overview of Program

The Seniors Assisting Seniors Program is managed by the Seniors Information & Resource Bureau (SIRB), where senior volunteers help other seniors to remain active and healthy in their local communities. The Program targets people 50 years old and older, in the Greater Vernon area, who are living independently in the community while experiencing limitations to their lifestyle because of the aging process. Many of the seniors receiving services are socially isolated as a result of financial, physical and/or mental health barriers. The program is a way to promote positive adaptation to age-related changes and allow older adults to remain in their chosen environment. This program also enables volunteers to connect, support, advocate and benefits themselves and other seniors, while making a practical contribution to the community. The goals of the program are the following:

- To plan, develop and implement a task exchange program that will respond to specific requests for assistance from seniors who need help with everyday tasks
- To enable seniors to remain independent and improve their current lifestyles
- To provide action oriented leadership in building a caring, inclusive community that will provide opportunities to these recipients of service and other seniors to volunteer their help when requested
- To promote self esteem, self respect and a sense of well-being for all elders in the community

Some examples of services that are offered by senior volunteers include, but are not limited to the following areas:

- Administrative
- Companionship
- Computer
- Correspondence/Financial
- Entertainment
- Garden/Yard Work
- Housekeeping
- House Maintenance
- Kitchen Duties
- Transportation

Planning for the program began in January 2007, though the database and actual services did not commence until July 2007.

Rationale for Program

There is a growing number of seniors in the Vernon area who require some assistance in order to stay active in the community. The SIRB experienced an upward trend in the number of requests for services from seniors requiring assistance with their daily living tasks. At the same time, the SIRB heard from surviving spouses, families, and other members of the community that isolation, financial changes, and social deprivation all contribute to the need for services to support seniors. This program was developed to address their concerns and to promote better social well-being, self-esteem and life satisfaction among seniors within the community.

There was an opportunity to apply for program funding through the New Horizons for Seniors Program Grant. Given that the program was designed with peer support, networking and the community in mind, SIRB was able to secure the funding required to implement the program.

Program Delivery

The program runs Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Arrangements for services can be made by telephone or through walk-in visits to the SIRB. The program operates in a variety of locations depending on needs of the individual seniors. Some services are offered in homes while others are in hospitals or out in the community.

The program is promoted through presentations made at community events, through news releases, brochure handouts and will soon be described on the Social Planning Council website. The program uses any available opportunity to share information about the need for programs such as this at senior centres, through newspaper releases, presentations and seniors accessing SIRB.

Resource Requirements

The Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan is a non-profit registered charity organization and the lead organization for SIRB, which operates the Seniors Assisting Seniors program. Partners include:

- The Government of Canada- New Horizons for Seniors Program
- Interior Health Authority

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Direct costs are approximately \$20,000 for the first year
- In-kind support is provided by senior volunteers who provide the services

Funding for the Seniors Assisting Seniors program is provided through a one-time grant from the Government of Canada under the New Horizons for Seniors Program. SIRB is funded by the Interior Health Authority. In January 2008, SIRB will take over the cost of running the program which is expected to be attainable because the program will be established.

The program relies completely on senior volunteers and a SIRB manager. There is no cost to participants.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation has taken place yet given that the program only started in July 2007. The program requires that follow up calls be made after each request for service. Feedback on the program has been very favourable so far. There has been a 43 percent increase in requests for services since the program began. The program is reviewed on a regular basis.

The program is successful because it is simple, practical and fulfills a needed service in the community. The elderly person receiving the service would be quite isolated without the help of the peer volunteers. The volunteer is able to enjoy a pleasant visit and check on the person's well-being. Often, lack of financial resources does not allow seniors to hire tradesmen or service people to get even the most practical tasks done (i.e. changing batteries in hearing aids to allow seniors to answer the phone or make calls).

Sustainability

The program could be strengthened by increasing program awareness among seniors in the community. More financial assistance would help in the delivery of the program.

Adequate volunteer seniors to respond to the requests for service are necessary in order to ensure success.

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Society for Learning in Retirement

Draft

Community/Region: Central Okanagan, BC

- The population is estimated at 162,000

Overview of Society

The Society for Learning in Retirement, based in Kelowna BC, offers classes in a variety of subjects including, but not limited to, current events, science, international politics, dance, music, language, computer and bridge. There are also specialized lectures and seminars on various topics that are of interest to the members such as health and wellness and senior abuse. The program targets all retired and semi-retired persons who share a love of learning and enjoy getting together to continue their studies regardless of the extent of their formal education. The goal of the program is to provide an opportunity for older adults to continue learning and make new social contacts. The program started in 1995 under the name of "Okanagan Institute for Learning in Retirement." In 2003, the Okanagan Institute for Learning in Retirement re-organized and became the "Society for Learning in Retirement (SLR)." The Society is staffed and led exclusively by volunteers.

Rationale for Program

The program was developed to provide more opportunities for retirees, regardless of their income level, to continue learning for as long as they want. The original idea came from a similar program offered at McGill University.

Program Delivery

The classes are offered at various settings depending on the type of class. Most of the classes are held in an old elementary school, which is shared with the local Boys and Girls club, while others are held at local retirement homes and a local dance studio. Currently there are about 60 different classes offered through the Society. Each class runs during the day once a week for about 10 weeks. They are two hours in length. Sessions start in September and again in January. There are also shorter sessions starting in the spring. Most of the classes are peer-led by study group leaders. Active participation is encouraged through small class sizes (up to 20). Participants travel up to about 20 kilometers to attend the classes.

The Society is marketed and promoted through the Society for Learning in Retirement's website, newsletters, newspaper advertisements, and television advertisements. However, the most effective method of promotion is through word-of-mouth by its members.

Resource Requirements

The Society for Learning is a non-profit society, sharing accommodation with the local Boys and Girls club in an old elementary school, which is leased from the city of Kelowna. They also rent a local dance studio, and work with a couple of retirement

homes to hold the music classes. Some funding for equipment is obtained from the gaming commission.

Many of the study group leaders are experts or have a lot of knowledge in the area of the study groups that they lead. Almost all of them are also members of the Society.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Approximately \$50,000 per year in direct costs
- In kind support - study group leaders and board members volunteer their time and the retirement homes are not paid for; they like to have a class held there.

The funding comes from membership and course fees and also from some gaming funds. Membership fees are \$15 per year and ten-week courses cost \$25. The program relies mostly on volunteers with the exception of one paid part-time office worker and a paid web site manager.

Evaluation

The program is reviewed on a regular basis by the Society's Board of Directors and study group leaders. Records are also kept on the classes, attendance and the general operation of the Society. The program is successful because it offers programs that interest people. It is run by seniors, for seniors.

One member said, "Becoming a member of SLR and taking classes is probably the best thing I have done since I retired."

Sustainability

The program could be strengthened if it had bigger and better facilities, including a kitchen and a comfortable and spacious lounge for coffee breaks. In order for the program to continue to succeed, it needs enthusiastic group leaders, participants and board of directors.

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Draft

Communities with a Population of Over 250,000 People

{insert picture}

Arts, Health and Seniors Project

Community/Region: Vancouver and North Shore, BC

- The population of North Shore is estimated at 181,000
- The population of Vancouver is estimated at 588,000

Overview of Project

The Arts, Health and Seniors Project (AHS) is a community arts initiative involving four groups of marginalized seniors in Vancouver and the North Shore in art workshops led by professional artists. The project targets seniors with low income, new immigrants, those with chronic health conditions and lesbian and gay seniors. There are 60 participants ranging in age from 60-89, 70 percent of whom are female. The project started in September 2006 and will be on-going for three years.

The AHS Project is working with existing groups of seniors. Selection was made at a group level by identifying communities facing particular challenges with regards to their optimal health and well-being. The project aims to assess the role that the arts can play in the health of seniors as well as to build the capacity of local artists, seniors workers and health providers.

The project has three main components:

- *Art Project*- Seniors are matched with nine professional artists to participate in two-hour weekly art workshops for nine months (September 2007- June 2008) leading to an annual public exhibition or performance. Throughout the year seniors are taken to professional art shows so that they have the opportunity to see the connection between their work and the larger body of art in their discipline of choice.
- *Evaluation*- Conducted in partnership with UBC, studying how the arts affect the health of seniors and how they can play a role in healthy aging.
- *Capacity-Building*- There are bi-monthly Community of Practice sessions and the bi-annual theme workshops which aim to build capacity of local health and recreation providers and artists for implementing similar programs.

Rationale for Project

This is a new project but is based on other community cultural initiatives such as the Artists in Residence program offered by the Park Board. The pilot project aims to explore the role that the arts can play in the health and well-being of seniors in Vancouver. It is based on research evidence that community arts have a positive impact on seniors' health and well-being.

Project Delivery

The workshops are offered once a week and are held at community centres, seniors' centres and the lobby of subsidized housing. The participants do not have to travel far, as the workshops are offered in the same neighbourhood as their main residence.

Marketing and promotion of the project is done through the respective organizations working with the target populations.

The richness of the AHS Project lies in the partnerships that it has been able to foster. First, organizations involved with seniors that were not working together are now joining efforts to reach out to the most marginalized seniors. Second, the project has brought together practitioners in the arts, health and recreation sectors that are now developing programs that cross the boundaries of their fields. Finally, the project is a model of a community-academic partnership that contributes to a better evaluation of community programs for seniors.

Resource Requirements

The Renfrew Park Community Association is the administrative host of the program. There are partnerships between the health and recreation sectors and organizations serving seniors. Partners include:

- Community centres (Renfrew, Britannia, Strathcona and Silver Harbour)
- The LGTB Centre
- UBC School of Nursing
- North Shore Recreation Commission
- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
- Vancouver Park Board

The program manager has expertise in Community Health Planning. Artists were selected based on their experience working with community groups.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- \$120,000 per year in direct costs- covers administration, art materials, evaluation, and salaries
- In-kind support- provided by project volunteers and workshop space locations (community centres, seniors' centres and subsidized housing)

The funding comes from the following sources:

- BC Arts Council
- North Shore Community Foundation
- Society for the Arts in Health Care
- United Way of Lower Mainland

- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority- SMART Fund
- Vancouver Foundation
- Vancouver Park Board

The project is financially sustainable for its three-year duration. Most of the staff are paid, although there are some student volunteers. There is no cost to the participants.

Evaluation

The evaluation is currently in progress. To maximize the learning from the project, the AHS Evaluation Framework has four components:

- *Outcome Evaluation*: Captures how participation in the program affects the mental, physical and social health of seniors
- *Process Evaluation*: Documents how the program works and how it may be replicated elsewhere
- *Participatory Evaluation*: A group of 8-10 seniors (peer reporters) are trained in documentation techniques to capture the story of other seniors from their own perspective. The peer reporters empower seniors to participate in the evaluation and decide what aspect of the project and its impacts on seniors' lives are important to document
- *Community of Practice*: This is the knowledge translation component of the project where artists and senior workers reflect on their practice and incorporate new learning.

Sustainability

The project could be strengthened if it could increase its capacity to serve more communities of seniors. It would also be great to increase funding for the research component of the project.

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Good Food Box Program

Draft

Community/Region: Vancouver, BC

- The population is estimated at 588,000

Overview of Project

The Good Food Box Program is a food buying club that provides a variety of nutritious foods to people in the Aboriginal Community in East Vancouver. The program involves boxes of food being delivered to households at a low cost once a month. The program arose from the Urban Aboriginal Food Enhancement Project, a project developed by the Vancouver Native Housing Society (VNHS). The Urban Aboriginal Food Enhancement Project provides an opportunity for Aboriginal people in East Vancouver to develop and manage a network. The network builds capacity by taking action on food security issues including the establishment of the Good Food Box program. The Good Food Box program targets Aboriginal people in East Vancouver, including seniors, regardless of income level or housing situation. The project began in April 2007 and has secured funding for three years. The goal of the project was to start with 24 boxes and increase this amount to 96 over a period of six months. The program strives to provide a “hand up,” not a “hand out.”

Rationale for Project

Studies on Aboriginal People in Canada have led organizations such as VNHS to focus on food security and dietary needs of Aboriginal people. Other projects run from the VNHS have highlighted the need to improve access to nutritious foods for urban Aboriginal People, regardless of age, gender, health status, or living situation. A number of health conditions are more prevalent in the urban Aboriginal Community than in other ethnic groups and proper food can help preventing or managing many disabling conditions.

Project Delivery

Good Food Boxes are available once a month to participants for a small fee. Distribution depots are set up in strategic locations throughout the community to make it convenient for participants to pick up their food boxes. For people who have difficulty leaving their homes, such as the elderly, special arrangements can be made to deliver the food box right to their doors.

In order to fully engage with the target audience, meetings are held in various neighbourhoods and different parts of the city to find out more about the dietary needs of the participants. The feedback received at the meetings has been very informative and has helped tailor the program towards the participants. All the ingredients for the food boxes are purchased locally and according to the season, when possible.

The program is being promoted through e-mail lists, community centres, neighbourhood houses, services that work with Aboriginal groups, and also by word-of-mouth.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization is the Vancouver Native Housing Society (VNHS), a registered non-profit society. Partners include:

- Aboriginal Diabetes Awareness Prevention and Training Program
- Community centres
- Environmental Youth Alliance
- Housing Societies
- Local Community Garden Networks
- Native Organizations
- Urban Aboriginal Community Kitchen Garden Project
- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
- Vancouver Community Food Action Network

Staff and volunteers must have a great deal of community outreach experience as well as knowledge of food security in Aboriginal communities.

Funding

- \$50,000 in direct costs- includes one paid staff, space rental, human resources, administrative expenses, and extra money for topping off the food boxes- participants pay \$8 per box on top of this amount
- In-kind support- volunteers to help with various aspects of the program

The main funding source is a grant of \$50,000 per year for three years, from the Aboriginal Health Initiative Program through the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. After the three-year period, another grant will be necessary to keep the program running. Currently the program can be run with the existing budget and participant fees; however, once the amount of orders increases, this may change. Funding for more than one paid staff may be required as the program expands, in order to continue operating the program efficiently. The program currently relies heavily on volunteers from the community.

Evaluation

Monthly evaluations will be performed which will include getting participant feedback through both surveys and community meetings. Reports are generated from the meetings with the communities which helps guide the program. The program will be reviewed on an on-going basis by other departments within VNHS.

The program is meeting its objectives of providing Urban Aboriginal people access to nutritious food and becoming more aware of food security issues within the Aboriginal

community. Feedback from participants on the program has been positive and the program continues to generate interest from members of the Aboriginal community.

Sustainability

The scope of the program can be strengthened by providing more boxes to communities each month. The community meetings have pointed out that many people would like to access more traditional foods. More funding would allow greater access to people who cannot afford the \$8 fee for a food box. It would also allow the program to provide foods that are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal people. More spaces for food processing, such as smokehouses and dehydration facilities, is another way that the project could be strengthened and might be considered in the future.

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Jewish Family Service Agency- Home Support Service

Draft

Community/Region: Vancouver, Burnaby, and Richmond BC

- The combined population is estimated at 990,000
- The majority of the Jewish population lives in Vancouver. There are approximately 3,000 Jewish seniors in greater Vancouver.

Overview of Program

The Jewish Family Service Agency (JFSA) is a social service organization committed to the values and ethics of the Jewish community. The Home Support Service is one of the programs offered by JFSA. The program has a “fee for service” structure with a sliding scale based on income. More than 50 percent of the people served have annual incomes under \$25,000. Only Jewish seniors are eligible because the program is subsidized by Jewish donors and foundations. The goal of the program is to address the household needs of Jewish seniors in Vancouver in a manner that is affordable, accessible and provides excellent quality service. Seniors are either self-referred or are referred by family, physicians, social workers or family/friends. The Home Support Service began in January 2004 and is ongoing.

Rationale for Program

The Seniors’ Outreach Counselors from the JFSA identified the need for community affordable home support; this need escalated after the Continuing Care cut backs in 2004, especially in independent activities of daily living (i.e. shopping, cooking and cleaning). The program is based on a home support service model. The difference is that this Home Support Service has a sliding scale of fees based on income. All policies and procedures are similar to other proprietary/not for profit home support agencies.

Program Delivery

The services offered range from two hours every second week to eight hours per day. Arrangements can also be made for overnight stays or short-term live-in help. The Home Support Workers are compassionate, reliable and hard-working. They are matched specifically to the clients in terms of language, personality and skills required.

The program is marketed and promoted through brochures at Jewish service organizations, informal presentations, and by referral through Seniors’ Outreach Counselors at the JFSA. The program is largely promoted by word-of-mouth.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization is the Jewish Family Service Agency (JFSA) of Vancouver, a non-profit agency. Partners include:

- The Jewish Federation (similar to the United Way)

- The Diamond Foundation
- The Snider Foundation

Staff of the JFSA have experience in hiring/supervising staff, knowledge of seniors' issues, strong assessment skills, tact and diplomacy in dealing with seniors and families, and knowledge of human resources. Home Support Workers must have practical experience working with seniors. The JFSA provides staff development resources.

Funding

- \$6,000 per month in direct costs includes Home Support Worker wages and \$18,000 per year for Coordinator wages
- Revenue from clients is approximately \$6,000 per month

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority SMART fund provided a one-time grant for the first 18 months to help get the program started. Following this, two foundations with strong Jewish roots, the Diamond Foundation and the Snider Foundation, provided grants to the program to help offset the costs for low income seniors receiving the service. The Jewish Federation also provided a grant to help cover program costs this year. Other costs such as office space, computer and telephone are covered by the JFSA.

Clients pay one of three rates per hour on a sliding scale based on income; \$8, \$12 or \$19 per hour. All fees paid by the clients go towards the home support workers' wages. The differences between the fees paid and the cost of the services rendered are covered by the grants. The program would not be financially sustainable without the support of the funding partners.

Evaluation

Numerous testimonials from clients and families, as well as comments on billing forms, yearly mailed evaluations and comments recorded in client and worker files have been the main method of evaluation. The service began with two clients and has grown to serve approximately 60 clients per month. The growth in the service has been very positive. All Home Support Workers complete timesheets signed by the clients. All clients have files with detailed information regarding home visits, contact information and feedback. The service is reviewed on an ongoing basis.

The success of the service is due to the team of excellent staff, including the Coordinator and Home Support Workers. It can also be attributed to the fact that all Jewish seniors are able to access help through the service, regardless of income.

Sustainability

Additional and secure funding would help strengthen the program by making it financially sustainable. The Coordinator wages cannot be incorporated into the fees because the costs for the clients would be too high.

Draft

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Life Unlimited

Community/Region: Vancouver, BC

- The population is estimated at 588,000
- Within Vancouver, the population of the West End is approximately 45,000 people

Overview of Program

Life Unlimited is a program that started in 2001 that provides isolated, low income seniors living with age-related disabilities with a variety of volunteer practical support services. Services offered by the program include shopping, visiting, phone calls and assistance getting to and from medical appointments. Although these types of services tend to fall outside the realm of the health sector, they can help to maintain or improve older people's mental and physical health as well as their quality of life. The clients are culturally diverse and are generally between 70 and 95 years old, many live at the poverty level and most tend to be isolated with no family support. In order to be eligible for the services, clients have to be seniors, homebound and living with an age-related disability. The senior must also live in the West End. The goal of the program is to help keep seniors living independently in their homes for as long as possible.

Rationale for Program

Due to the high proportion of seniors living in the community, the West End Seniors' Network identified a need for a program that would help seniors in the West End age in place, and be part of the community, for as long as possible.

Program Delivery

The shopping and visiting components of the program are offered weekly. Friendly phone calls can be made daily as well as assistance to medical appointments at the physician's office or hospital; however, 48 hours notice is required for this service.

The program is advertised in the monthly West End Seniors' Network Newsletter, by word-of-mouth, and through collaboration with the geriatric clinic at St. Paul's Hospital and 3 Bridges Community Health Centre.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization for Life Unlimited is the West End Seniors' Network, a non-profit society. There are no participating partners at this time; however, St. Paul's Hospital and the Three Bridges Community Health Centre provide information about the Life Unlimited services to potential clients.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Approximately \$42,000 per year in direct costs
- In-kind support is provided by Life Unlimited Volunteers

Funding is provided by a time-limited Vancouver Coastal Health SMART Fund. Without this funding the program would not be financially sustainable. Monetary contributions are also made from the West End Seniors' Network. These combined funds cover the cost of the wages for two part-time staff as well as the resources required to provide the services such as transportation, work space and other administrative costs. There is no cost to the clients for the services that they receive.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation has been conducted; however, outcome measurement reports are submitted to the main funder regularly, including documents and records on program implementation. The program has reached its goal by filling the need for services that help homebound seniors in the West End age in place.

The success of the program can be attributed to the dedicated volunteers and the program coordinator who makes good matches between clients and volunteers.

Sustainability

The program could be strengthened if it could secure more funding which would enable the West End Seniors' Network to expand the program to other areas of the City and to allow for more staff hours.

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Osteofit

Community/Region: British Columbia

- The population is estimated at 4,113,000
- The program is offered at various facilities across the province

Overview of Program

Osteofit is a safe and accessible community exercise and education program of the BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre that started in 1996. It aims to reduce the risk of falling and fractures for people at risk for falls and people with osteoporosis and osteopenia. The participants must provide a medical letter in order to participate. This program provides them the opportunity to exercise in a safe environment as well as learn more about living with osteoporosis. The focus is on increasing strength, balance and coordination, functional ability, independence and quality of life. Classes include discussions on topics related to living with osteoporosis. The objectives of the program are as follows:

- To provide a safe and accessible falls prevention exercise program throughout BC
- To provide education/training on exercise, bone health and falls prevention across BC
- To develop and maintain partnerships between Osteofit, health care professionals and other partners
- To contribute to policy development in the field of exercise, bone health and falls prevention
- To contribute to research development in the field of exercise, bone health and falls prevention

Rationale for Program

Osteofit addresses the need for a safe and accessible community-based exercise and education program to reduce the risk of falls and fractures for people with osteoporosis and osteopenia. The program design is supported by clinical members of the Osteoporosis Program at BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre and is based on published research and best practice.

Program Delivery

Osteofit is a trademark program that is delivered according to the curriculum provided by the BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre. The Osteofit classes are offered through local community service providers across the province. Osteofit provincial and regional coordinators are available to provide support as required. The classes are held primarily in community centres. Participants register each term at their respective community centre after providing a medical letter. Classes are usually held twice per week. There are

two levels in the Osteofit program. Level 1 is an introductory program which offers between 12-20 sessions. Level 2 is the maintenance program which offers sessions at the discretion of the facilities. There are efforts made to engage with the participants at many levels. The classes are small and informal which allows for a lot of interaction between participants and the instructor.

The distance that participants have to travel to attend classes varies depending on the community; however, the intent is that over time, classes will be offered in every community across BC that is able to support the program.

The program is promoted on the Osteofit website, via pamphlets and posters, and in the calendars and other processes used within the recreational sector. Public Service Announcements are used, as are various channels provided by the partners.

Resource Requirements

The lead organization is the BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre, a member of the Provincial Health Services Authority. Partners include:

- BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA)
- Community centres across the province
- Osteoporosis Canada, BC Division
- Royal Bank of Canada Foundation

All Osteofit instructors are required to have the following:

- BCRPA Fitness Leader Registration
- Third Age (Seniors) designation
- Current CPR and First Aid
- Completed the Osteofit instructors training course and passed the exam
- Passed the Osteofit instructor competency evaluation (O-ICE)

They are also required to maintain their certification with professional development workshops and to re-register every two years.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

The funding sources include the following:

- BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre
- Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) via the Prevention, Promotion, Protection project funding envelope
- RBC Foundation, based on an annual allocation process

The PHSA project funding is time-limited, ending in March 2008. After this time the PHSA will decide if funding will continue which will be based on the evaluation currently being performed.

The program relies on paid staff, including the Osteofit provincial and regional coordinators. The Osteofit instructors that teach the classes are independent of the Osteofit staff and are paid by their respective facility.

The cost of running the classes varies depending on the community in which it is offered. The Program curriculum is offered to the community centres free of charge but course fees are determined by service providers.

Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation for the PHSA is currently in progress. It will be completed in the fall of 2007.

Sustainability

The program depends on the staff, instructors, facilities to offer and promote the program and health care professionals to recommend Osteofit. Other issues of sustainability will be addressed in the evaluation.

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Seniors in Communities Dialogues

Community/Region: British Columbia

- The population is estimated at 4,113,000
- All local governments are eligible to apply
- Communities receiving grants range in population from less than 5,000 to over 100,000 people

Overview of Program

A “Seniors in Communities Dialogue” is an organized exchange or collaboration between local government leaders and seniors or others involved in the delivery of seniors’ services within a community or group of communities. It provides an opportunity to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern. Issues may relate to housing, transportation, health care, recreation, social opportunities or any other issue pertaining to the well-being of seniors wishing to age in place. The dialogue is intended for local governments, seniors and senior-serving organizations.

The purpose of a “Seniors in Communities Dialogue” is the following:

- Increase knowledge of existing Seniors’ programs within the area
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of existing programming
- Understand the role of other groups involved in providing services for seniors
- Investigate best practices and explore the possibility of new initiatives

Most of the dialogues are designed to provide an exchange of information between seniors, local governments and other participants. Others focus on providing information to seniors about available programs and facilities. Some dialogues are general, and some focused on specific topics (i.e. transportation and housing).

An application may be made by way of a simple application form and must meet the following criteria:

- Be submitted by a local government
- Identify the groups/individuals to be represented in the dialogue
- Identify the potential topics for discussion
- Identify potential outcomes
- Advise of anticipated meeting dates or time frame
- Be accompanied by an itemized budget

The program is designed to:

- Increase understanding of participating local governments about existing seniors programs and needs in their communities
- Assist in determining strengths and weaknesses in the provision of services

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- Provide a forum to discuss issues specific to seniors
 - Build stronger links between local governments, health care providers, non-profit organizations and others involved in providing services to the senior population
 - Determine opportunities for future collaboration and joint action

Rationale for Program

Launched in 2004, UBCM's Seniors' Housing and Support Initiative (SHSI) was created through a one-time \$2 million grant from the provincial Ministry of Community Services to assist local governments to prepare for an aging population. In 2007, the Ministry of Health provided a \$0.5 million grant to further support the initiative and to incorporate a focus on Age-Friendly projects.

In the initial phases of the program, the emphasis was on information sharing, including workshop sessions at all five local government Area Association meetings, the development of a seniors' website and grants for Seniors in Communities Dialogues. Feedback and analysis of these initial grants led to the creation of pilot project funding as well.

Program Delivery

The dialogues take place at various community locations across the province. Local government facilities tend to host most of the events in places such as recreation centres, seniors centres and meeting rooms; however, community halls and other spaces that accommodate large groups have been used as well.

Usually only one dialogue takes place in each community; however, depending on funding requests, local governments may submit more than one application. Some communities hold their dialogue through more than one event, or they do research prior to the event (i.e. through surveys or focus groups). Final reports are due within 30 days of the completion of the event.

A range of topics can be discussed at the dialogues, including:

- Seniors' Housing Options
- Community Infrastructure
- Health Services
- Social Supports
- Communications
- Transportation
- Age Friendly Planning

The marketing and promotion of the dialogues is up to the applicant. Some dialogues are public events that are advertised in newspapers or in municipal newsletters or websites and others are more targeted and are by invitation only.

Resource Requirements

The Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) administers the Seniors Housing and Support Initiative on behalf of the Ministry of Community Services. Although local governments are the main leaders in the dialogues and are the only eligible applicant, outside organizations such as community groups, seniors groups and health organizations often play a key role.

Depending on the format, the dialogues can be facilitated by a broad range of people. Some applicants hire a facilitator with specific skills and others rely on staff to manage the events. Some dialogues also use presenters who are experts in a particular area.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- Direct costs vary by community but the grant from the UBCM Seniors Housing and Support Initiative provides a maximum of \$3,000
- The local government is expected to contribute 50 percent of the cost of hosting the dialogue and this contribution can be through cash or in-kind expenditures

There is generally no cost to attend the dialogues. Usually both local government staff and volunteers play a role in organizing the dialogues.

Evaluation

A report on the dialogues from the Seniors Housing and Support Initiative was prepared in March 2007. To date more than 35 dialogues have been held. Final Reports are posted on the “Seniors in Communities” website for the benefit of other communities. Starting in 2007/08 a final report form will be required to be completed. It will include:

- A summary of issue discussed
- Recommendations and outcomes
- Participants list
- A letter from the CFO confirming how the funds were used and identify the community contribution

Status reports on the Seniors Housing and Support Initiative will continue to be produced for the duration of the program.

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Intergenerational Landed Learning on the Farm for the Environment

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Community/Region: Vancouver and other parts of the Lower Mainland

- The population is estimated at 2,116,000

Overview of Project

The program began in 2002 as a small pilot project that operated with one teacher and 18 grade seven students for two years and has since expanded. The project has an intergenerational focus which is one of the reasons that it is so unique. It targets middle-school children, retired members of the community and local gardeners, as well as undergraduate and graduate students. The project is a year-long program that begins each fall. Children from participating schools meet at the UBC farm and are partnered with volunteer retired community members, UBC students, and avid gardeners to form “Farm Friend Groups.” These groups consist of three to five middle-school children and one or two community adults or UBC students. These intergenerational groups work together through various stages of the growing cycle to plan, plant and harvest food crops at the Farm.

Project activities include:

- Conversations, interviews and story-telling with Farm Friends
- Planning in the on-site greenhouse
- Cultivation of the land, planting and caring for plants
- Planning and conducting science experiments
- Writing team or individual journals documenting the farming activities
- Communicating learning and experience, via PowerPoint and other presentations

The project aims to examine how a cross-generational approach on learning to grow food might inspire young Canadians to care for the land and life on earth.

The objectives are:

- To investigate whether participation in a farm-based intergenerational project can foster environmental concern and care in children and promote subject specific knowledge and skills
- To develop a deeper understanding of the kind of learning that occurs in a community/field based experience for children and the potential for integrating environmental and science education

These are some of the key questions that guide the project and define the research educational approach:

- Will young people develop care for the environment through working with community adults to grow good crops on an urban organic farm?

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- What role does an intergenerational approach play in inspiring stewardship in children?
 - In what ways does this educational experience impact the health and wellbeing of the children and adults?
 - Additional questions being investigated are the ways children's understanding of farms and farmers change through this experience, the impact the project has on the children's food choices and eating habits, the benefits of the experience for the community adults (many of whom are seniors), and the ways the teaching of all school subjects can be an integral part of an intergenerational food growing experience

The Goals for 2007-2008 are:

- To refine the program themes and activities based on past years of experience and through planning meetings with teachers
- To develop four publications based on the project: a resource book for teachers, an activity book for parents and children, a handbook of effective practices for volunteers, and a compilation of case studies of similar projects across Canada. These publications are intended to provide advice and support for those who wish to initiate a similar program in their communities

Program Rationale

The project is innovative and has become a model for other farming programs in BC. There are many published papers about the project that provide research evidence and rationale for intergenerational learning and environmental education. A list of these publications can be viewed on the project website under the heading 'research project.' The internet link is available at the bottom of this case study.

Program Delivery

The project operates at the Land Food Community Garden at the UBC Farm. Program activities take place from September to June regardless of the weather. Each school year, the children visit the UBC Farm approximately 13 times. Children are transported to the Farm on a school bus or by parent carpools. The volunteers are responsible for their own transportation and this is usually by bus, bicycle or automobile. On each visit, children take part in organized field-based lessons and guided activities. Other learning activities also take place in the classroom at school. Volunteers are provided with an initial orientation, a set of resources for every visit, pre-visit briefings, and community-building sessions.

Resource Requirements

The lead on the project is the Department of Curriculum Studies in the Faculty of Education at UBC. Key partners are the Vancouver School Board and the Faculty of Land and Food Systems at UBC.

The requirements for volunteers are that they must have experience with or be interested in farming and gardening. Volunteers with less experience receive on-site training. They also must display a concern for the environment. In addition to having an interest in children and intergenerational programs, the volunteers are interviewed and must pass a criminal record check. The paid staff must have their Food Safe certification.

Funding (Sources, Costs and In-Kind Support)

- \$80,000 per year in direct costs
- The in-kind support received totals \$45,000

The project is able to run within its existing budget; however to ensure financial sustainability, a long-term funding source will be required. Currently, the funding comes from a variety of sources. Please refer to the program report for a complete list of the funding sources and in-kind support. To date, there is no cost for the students to participate. In 2006-2007 there were 43 volunteers who contributed 2100 hours.

There were also four paid staff including a program manager, a program assistant, a garden manager, and a research, evaluation and communication assistant. In-kind support and program administration was provided by project directors. Other costs include supplies, equipment, materials, transportation, conference travel and research expenses.

Evaluation

The project is being evaluated through a program of ongoing research. In addition to the set of published articles available, a technical/annual report is available to funders. There are four publications currently in progress, including a teachers' guide, a parent-child activity book, a volunteer handbook, and a collection of case studies of similar projects across Canada.

The program is definitely reaching its goals for the students, teachers and volunteers. Part of the reason for this can be attributed to the management, organization and committed personnel and volunteers that help run the program. The project provides a powerful model and lessons on sustainable living and food growing practices and environmental stewardship and helps teachers integrate environmental education in their classrooms.

Program Sustainability

A long-term funding strategy is essential in order to sustain the activities of the program. Additional resources identified as being necessary to the success of the program:

- Equipment and supplies for cultivating, gardening, and maintaining the growing space at the farm
- Funds for project communication, education materials, program development and educational research

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- Continued funding for four paid staff positions
- Additional volunteers from the local community interested in long-term commitment (for the full duration of 1 school year)

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http://www.landfood.ubc.ca/ubcfarm/documents/Symposium_3a.pdf (Report)

www.cust.educ.ubc.ca/projects/landedlearning.html (Website)

Case Study Contacts

Communities with a Population of Less than 50,000 people

<i>Communities with a Population of Less than 50,000 people</i>	
Age-Friendly Project	Mayor John Rowell Village of Alert Bay Phone: (250) 974-5213 Fax: (250) 974-5470 Email: jrowell@alertbay.ca
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Penticton Steps Out	Bob Pope Steps Out Coordinator Phone: (604) 490-2436 Email: info@stepsout.com Website: http://www.stepsout.com/penticton/
Providing Access in Sparwood	Gary Walker Phone: (250) 425-0552 Email: recreation@sparwood.bc.ca
Select Committee on Seniors' Issues	Carol Wynne District of Squamish Select Committee on Seniors Issues Recreation Program Supervisor/Staff advisor to committee Phone: (604) 898-6882 Email: cwynne@squamish.ca

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<i>Communities with a Population of Less than 50,000 people</i>	
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The Meadows School Project	Sharon MacKenzie Project Coordinator and Teacher Kidston Elementary School Phone: (250) 308- 7892 Email: Sharon.Mackenzie@shaw.ca
Tuesdays Together	Olena Bramble Seniors Coordinator Volunteer Development and Programming Phone: (250) 547-8866 Email: obramble@img.net

Communities with a Population of 50,000 to 250,000 People

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Active Seniors Enjoying Life	Kim Dixon Executive Director Phone: (604) 386-3035 Email: kim.dixon@shawbiz.ca Website: www.jamesbaynewhorizons.com
Falls Prevention Project in the Senior Population	Koreen Gurak Manager of Leisure Development Comox Strathcona Regional District Parks and Recreation Services Phone: (205) 334-6066 Fax: (250) 334-8156 Email: kgurak@rdcs.bc.ca Website: www.comoxstrathcona.ca
Fit Fellas	Collene Huskisson Community Recreation Supervisor West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre Phone: (604) 925-7286 Email: chuskisson@westvancouver.ca
Get Ready for Grad Event	Judy Hamanishi Recreation Program Coordinator Coquitlam Leisure and Parks Services Phone: (604) 933-6050 Email: jhamanishi@coquitlam.ca
Greenhouse project	Donna Carlyle Phone: (250) 428-5655 Email: dc@kes.bc.ca
Healthy Aging Education Series	Anne Waller City of Burnaby Citizen Support Services Phone: (604) 294-7497 Fax: (604) 570-3614

<i>Communities with a Population of 50,000 to 250,000 People</i>	
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Home Safety Check Program	Pat Black North Okanagan Falls Prevention Program Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan Phone: (250) 545-8572 Email: nofalls@socialplanning.ca Website: www.socialplanning.ca
Men's Cooking Class	JoAnne Fahr Seniors Services Supervisor Parkgate Community Centre Phone: (604) 983-6376 Fax: (604) 983-6357 Email: jfahr@myparkgate.com Website: http://www.parkgate.com
North Shore Keep Well Society	Pamela Baxter Program Director Phone: (604) 988-7115 ext. 27 Fax: (604) 988-7105 Email: keepwellsociety@telus.net
North Shore Seniors Go Bus	Annwen Loverin Phone: 604-980-2474 Fax: 604-980-6003 Email: annwenloverin@hotmail.com
Seniors Assisting Seniors	Dayle Drury, BSW Seniors Information & Resource Bureau Phone: (250) 545-0091 Email: sirb@socialplanning.ca Website: www.socialplanning.ca
Society for Learning in Retirement	Vera Ito Co-President Society for Learning in Retirement Phone: (250) 491-2790

Communities with a Population of 50,000 to 250,000 People

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Communities With a Population of Over 250,000 People

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Life Unlimited	Lynn Gardiner Executive Director West End Seniors' Network Phone: (604) 669-5051 Fax: (604) 669-7559 Email: WESNexeDirector@yahoo.ca
Osteofit	Jan Finch Program Director: BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre Phone: (604) 875-2727 Email: jfinch@cw.bc.ca Website: http://www.osteofit.org/
Seniors in Communities Dialogues	Danyta Welch Policy and Program Officer Union of British Columbia Municipalities Phone: (250) 356-5134 Email: dwelch@civicnet.bc.ca Website: http://www.seniorsincommunities.ca/
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<i>Communities with a Population of Over 250,000 People</i>	
	<u>Symposium 3a.pdf</u> (Report) <u>www.cust.educ.ubc.ca/projects/landedlearning.html</u> (Website)