



# A Report on “Safe Seniors, Strong Communities”

**For the 6-Month Period Between March 27 and September 30, 2020**

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**Healthy Aging**

**by United Way** At home. In community.

## A Report on “Safe Seniors, Strong Communities” For the 6-Month Period Between March 27 and September 30, 2020

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, many older British Columbians who normally lived independently with the help of family and friends found those supports unavailable and required more assistance to remain connected and engaged.

In response, the Provincial Ministry of Health, the Office of the Seniors Advocate, bc211 and the United Way of the Lower Mainland – through Healthy Aging by United Way (HAUW) – joined forces to create “Safe Seniors, Strong Communities” (SSSC), a coordinated, province-wide response to the pandemic that bolsters seniors supports and essential non-medical service delivery at community service agencies throughout B.C.

The bc211 service was expanded to all areas of B.C. to allow for anyone to call 2-1-1 if they needed some help with groceries, prepared meal delivery, medication pick up, a social connection buddy, and/or other types of supports. Also, anyone who wished to volunteer to support this initiative could call 2-1-1.

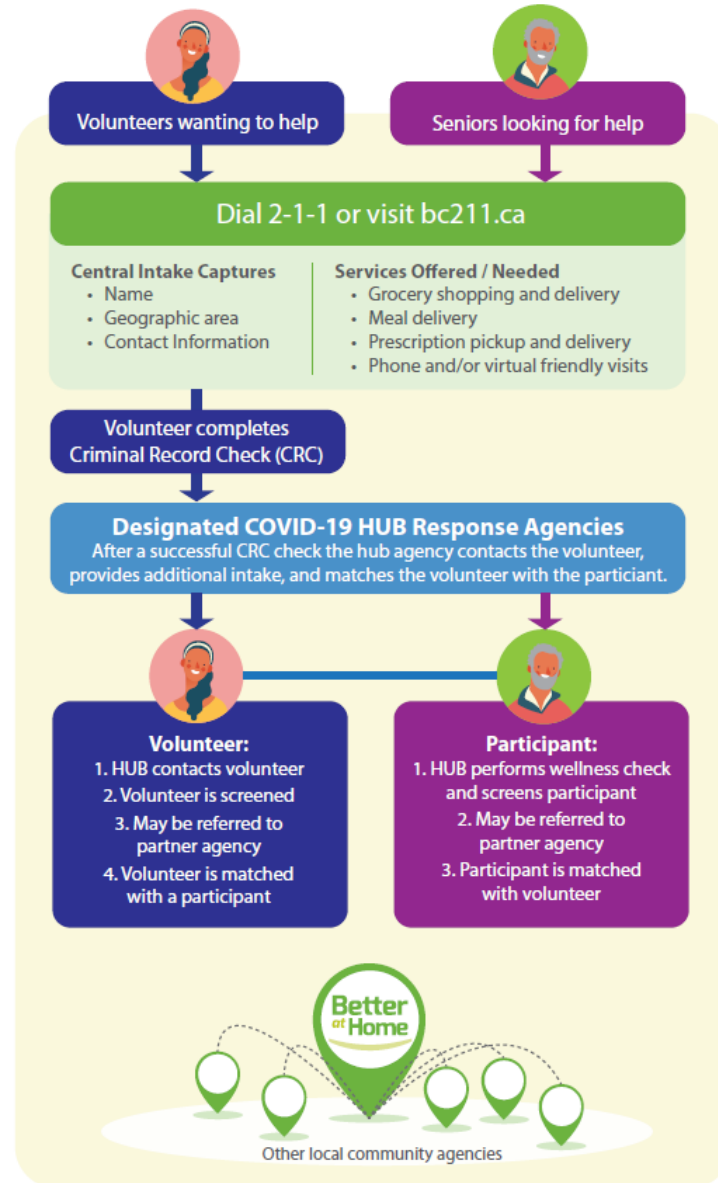
Between March 27 and September 30, 2020, funding was distributed across B.C. to support agencies to deliver SSSC services and supports. In addition, all HAUW-funded agencies were asked to shift their regular HAUW funding over to support SSSC and prioritize the needs of this initiative during the pandemic.

The report below summarizes the activities, senior and volunteer metrics, and agency partners involved in the SSSC initiative for the 6-month period between March and September 2020.

Thank you to all of our allies for prioritizing this critical and essential response for the older adults in B.C.



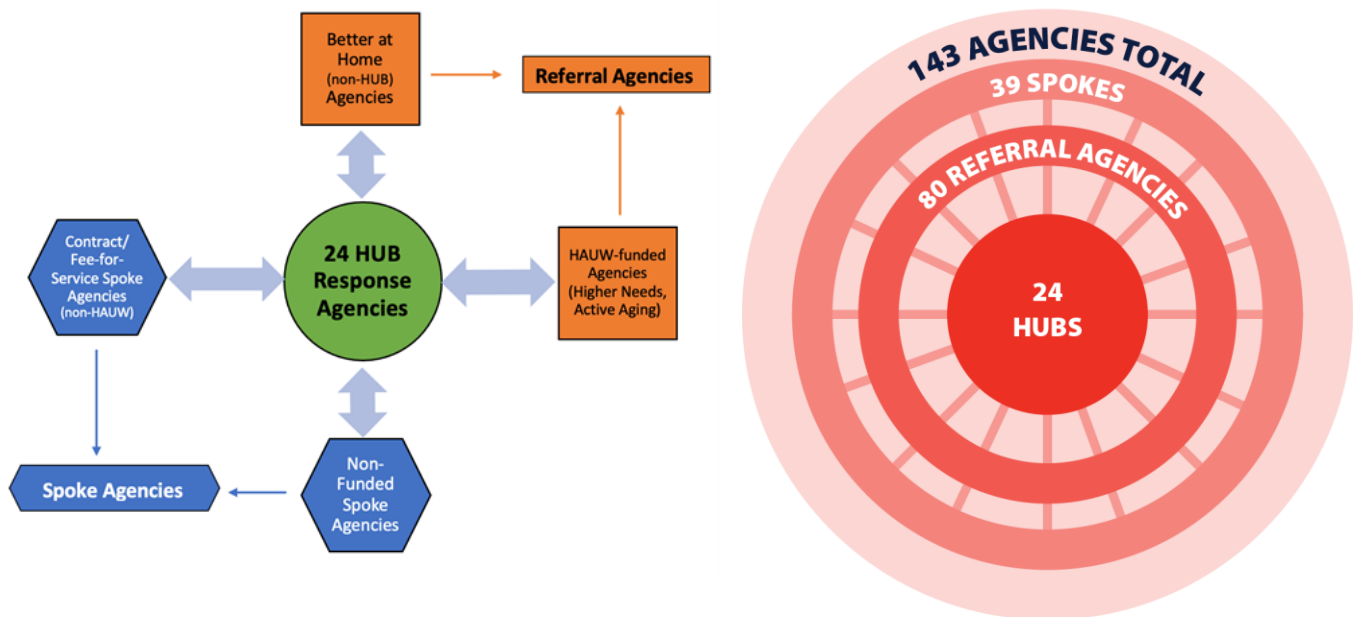
## Program Graphic – Flow of SSSC Referrals Through bc211



### How is the SSSC HUB & Spoke Model Structured?

Twenty-four (24) social service agencies throughout B.C. serve as HUB Response Agencies – all of whom are part of United Way’s province-wide network of strong, interconnected Better at Home providers. Volunteer and client requests are sent to one of the HUB agencies who match the needs of clients with volunteers for services. HUBs are also supported by over 140 agencies across the province to ensure the SSSC initiative is accessible to all older British Columbians. This HUB & Spoke Model has demonstrated the strength and capacity of the vast network of coordinated seniors supports across B.C.

	Healthy Authority Region			
	Lower Mainland	Island	IHA	NHA
# HUB Agencies	13 (VCH - 6; FHA - 7)	3	5	3
# Referral Agencies	34 (VCH - 19; FHA - 15)	19	18	9
# Spoke Agencies	13	5	16	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HAUW-Funded and CBSS Agencies Supporting SSSC</b>	<b>143</b> (+ ~80 agencies on as-needed basis)			



## Who is Using SSSC?

Since SSSC began at the end of March 2020, HUB, Referral and Spoke agencies have provided more than 15,500 seniors with over 350,000 services. Those who use the program come from across the province and the distribution of participants follows BC's population lines almost exactly.

Older adults were referred to the program from a variety of sources, including:

- Self-referrals
- CBSS agency referrals
- Doctors and nurses
- Friends, family & neighbours
- Healthcare workers operating in the community and in facilities such as hospitals
- Government, including Health Authorities
- Faith-based communities
- Housekeeping contractors
- Staff at seniors' residences/building managers
- Police, paramedics and other emergency services

Interestingly, the distribution of SSSC service-users across B.C. closely mirrored the distribution of the 60+ population, but not the prevalence of COVID-19 within health authority regions, thus, the number of COVID cases reported in that area did not appear to be a factor in seniors' use of SSSC.

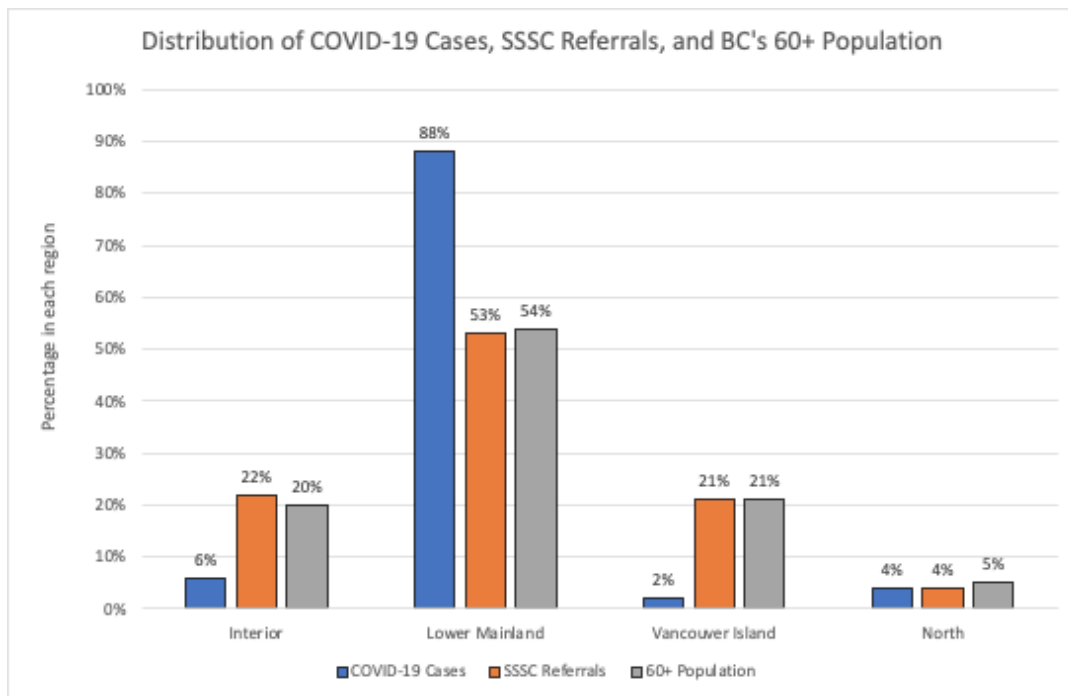


Figure 1.1 – Distribution of all COVID cases compared to SSSC senior referrals and population (60+) in B.C.

## SSSC Services and Supports

Critical to the role of program coordinators was the ability to triage services to ensure that the most urgent requests are addressed quickly. SSSC provided seniors with four key supports (and several others):

SSSC Services and Supports	VCH & FHA	Island	IHA	NHA	TOTAL
# Check-Ins (by Phone or Virtually)	92,027	53,900	25,086	8,957	<b>179,970</b>
# Grocery Shopping and Delivery Services	22,363	5,467	6,342	1,535	<b>35,707</b>
# Prepared Meal Delivery Services	29,566	33,742	17,204	2,648	<b>83,160</b>
# Prescription Pickup and Drop-off	228	382	304	60	<b>974</b>
# Other Services*	26,490	9,451	10,884	5,025	<b>51,580</b>
<b>Total Services Delivered:</b>	<b>170,674</b>	<b>102,942</b>	<b>59,820</b>	<b>18,225</b>	<b>351,661</b>

\*Other services includes a range of services offered [pre-COVID] by community agencies through the UWLM network of Better at Home program (including, but not limited to wellness checks, transportation to medical appointments, laundry & light housekeeping, yard work, information & referral navigation, help with taxes and filling out forms, support with technology). If an agency had the capacity to provide these services during the pandemic, they did.

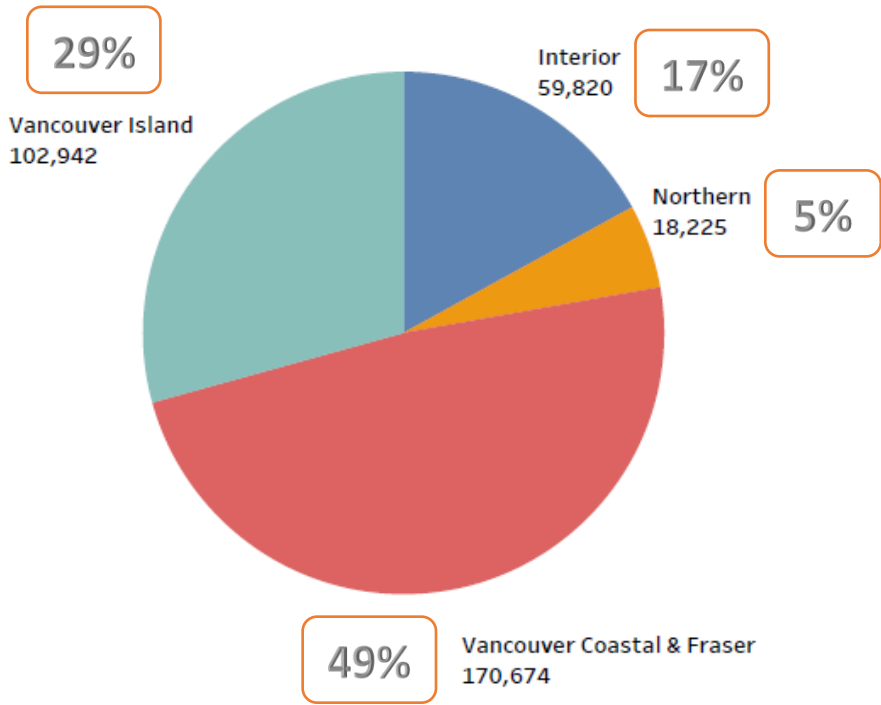


Figure 1.2 s – % of total SSSC services delivered by Health Authority region

### Referrals to the SSSC Initiative

Three-quarters (74%) of bc211’s senior referrals to HUB agencies, and 83% of bc211’s volunteer referrals occurred in March and April 2020. In the months that followed, referrals dropped significantly.

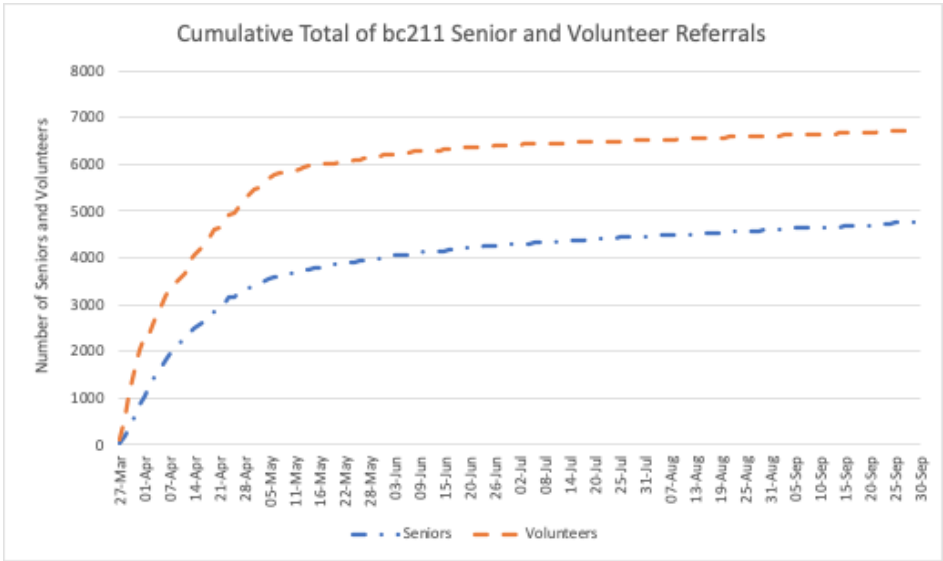


Figure 1.3 - Average daily senior and volunteer referrals from bc211, across Health Regions, by month

Provincially, just under 1/3 (31%) of SSSC participants were referred through bc211 to a HUB agency. The number of seniors referred through other means (walk/call in, existing agency participants, word of mouth, etc.) was 2.2 times greater. Below is the regional distribution of senior referrals:

Senior Referrals to SSSC	VCH & FHA	Island	IHA	NHA	Total
# bc211 Senior Referrals:	2,854	1,154	537	218	<b>4,763</b>
# Other (non-bc211) Senior Referrals:	5,408	2,107	2,845	379	<b>10,739</b>
Total Senior Referrals to SSSC:	<b>8,262</b>	<b>3,261</b>	<b>3,382</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>15,502</b>

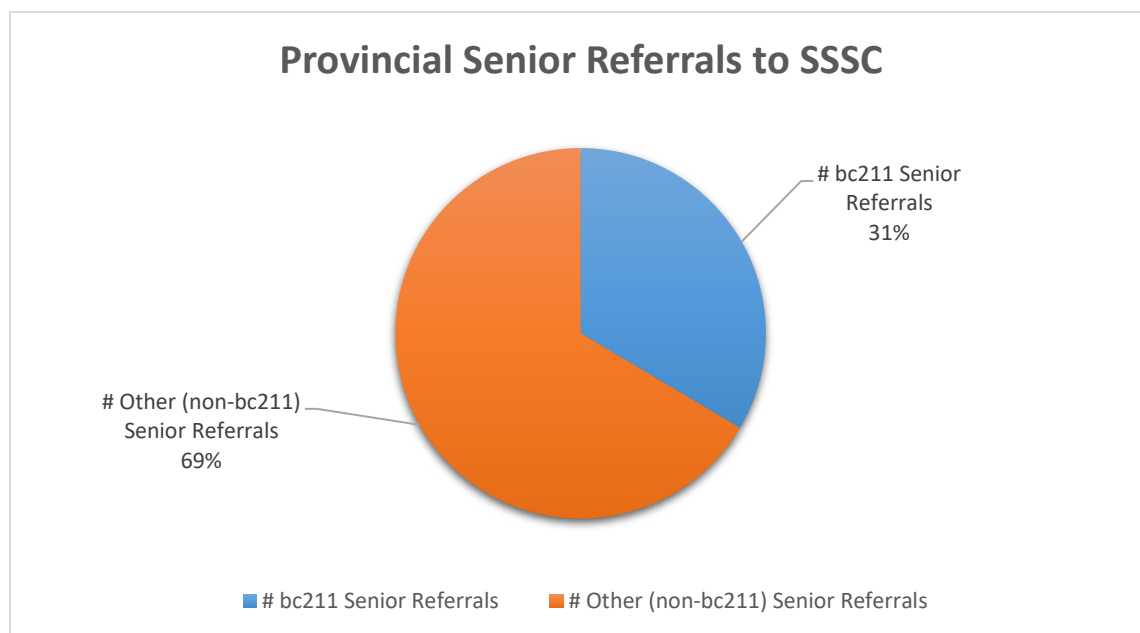


Figure 1.4 – % of seniors referred to SSSC by bc211 and other sources

The reverse was true for volunteers on a provincial scale: the number of volunteers referred by bc211 was 1.9 times greater than other referral sources (word of mouth, pre-existing volunteer partnership with agency, etc.).

While this was still true in the VCH, FHA and Island Health regions, the Interior saw an almost even split among bc211 and other referrals sources, and the North saw more volunteer referrals through other sources than through bc211. Below is the regional distribution of volunteer referrals:

Volunteer Referrals to SSSC	VCH & FHA	Island	IHA	NHA	Total
# bc211 Volunteer Referrals:	4,367	1,535	661	170	<b>6,733</b>
# Other (non-bc211) Volunteer Referrals:	1,720	1,125	622	205	<b>3,672</b>
Total Volunteer Referrals to SSSC:	<b>6,087</b>	<b>2,660</b>	<b>1,283</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>10,405</b>

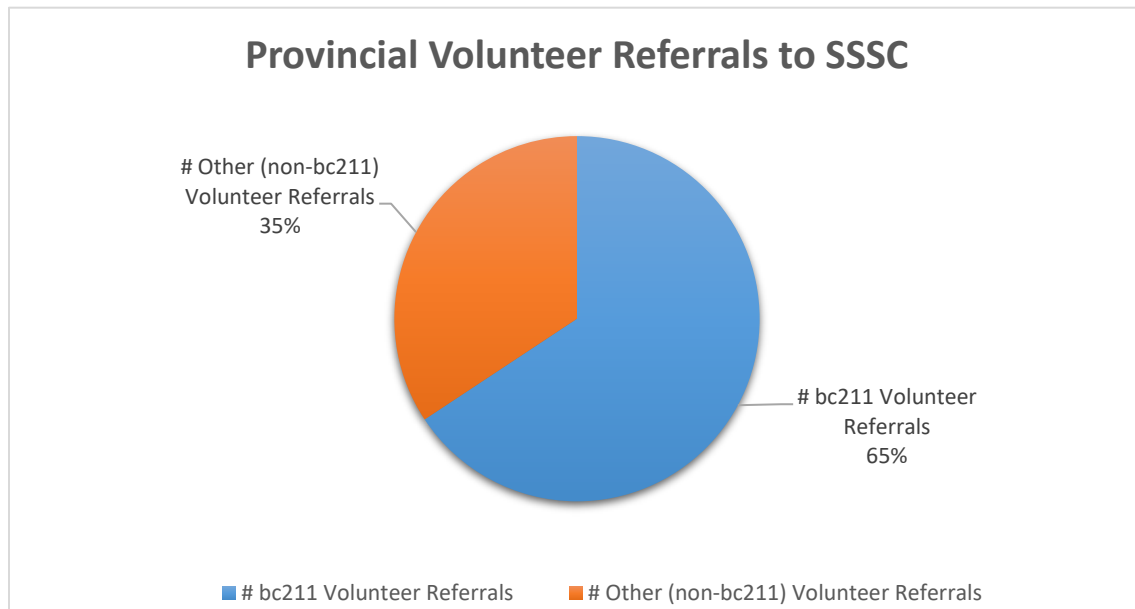


Figure 1.5 – % of volunteers referred to SSSC by bc211 and other sources

## Volunteer Demographics

The average age of bc211 volunteers engaged with the SSSC initiative is 36. The age distribution of bc211-referred volunteers is below:

Age Distribution of bc211 Volunteers	
<20	11%
20-29	40%
30-39	17%
40-49	9%
50-59	10%
60-69	11%
70+	2%

**77% of SSSC volunteers are between 20-50 years old.**

**The average age is 36.**

n=296

When compared to data from the Better at Home (BH) program over the 2019/2020 fiscal year, we see that, provincially, approximately 53% of BH volunteers self-identify as seniors (over age 65). The age discrepancy is largely because seniors were actively discouraged to participate in face-to-face volunteer activities due to stay-at-home orders for the most vulnerable groups during the pandemic.



## Agencies Supporting SSSC

HAUW would like to thank the staff and volunteers at our funded agencies for their dedication, exceptional leadership and compassion during this extraordinary time:

A Rocha Canada  
Abbotsford Association for Healthy Aging  
Alberni Valley Assisted Living Society  
Archway Community Services  
Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services  
Autumn Services  
Beacon Community Services  
Boundary Family Services Society  
Burnaby Neighbourhood House  
Burnaby Seniors Outreach Services Society  
Campbell River Volunteer Society  
Caregivers Network for East Kootenay Seniors Society  
Castlegar & District Community Services  
Chilliwack Community Services  
City of Burnaby - Citizen Support Services  
Collingwood Neighbourhood House  
Community Connections Society of Southeastern BC  
Cortes Island Seniors Centre  
Cowichan Family Caregivers Support Society  
Cowichan Seniors Community Foundation  
Deltassist Family & Community Services  
Desert Sun Counselling and Resource Centre  
District 69 Society of Organized Services  
DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society  
DRS Earthwise Society  
Eagle Valley Community Support Society  
Esquimalt Neighbourhood House Society  
Family Dynamix Association  
Family Services of the North Shore  
Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House  
Galiano Health Care Society  
Gitxsan Health Society  
Gordon Neighbourhood House

Hardy Bay Senior Citizens Society

Hiiye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship) Society

Hope Care Transit

Hornby & Denman Community Health Care Society

Inclusion Powell River Society

Interior Community Services

James Bay Community Project

Jewish Family Services

KinVillage Association

Kitimat Community Development Centre

Kitsilano Neighbourhood House

Kiwassa Neighbourhood House

Lake Country Health Planning Society

Langley Senior Resources Society

Logan Lake Wellness, Health & Youth Society

Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services

Mission Community Services Society

MOSAIC

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

Nanaimo Family Life Association

Nelson and District Hospice Society

Nelson CARES Society

Network of Inner City Community Services Society

NexusBC Community Resource Centre

North Cariboo Aboriginal Family Program Society

North Island Crisis & Counselling Centre Society

North Peace Seniors Housing Society

North Shore Community Resources Society

One Sky Community Resources

Pacific Centre Family Services Association

Parkgate Community Services Society

Peachland Wellness Centre

Pender Island Health Care Society

People for a Healthy Community on Gabriola Island Society

Prince George Native Friendship Centre

Prince Rupert Seniors Centre Association

Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society

Quadra Circle Community Connections Society

RayCam Community Association  
REACH Centre Association  
Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives  
Ridge Meadows Seniors Society  
Robson Valley Community Services Society  
S.U.C.C.E.S.S.  
Salt Spring and Southern Gulf Islands Community Services Society  
Sea to Sky Community Services  
Seabird Island Band  
Seniors Come Share Society  
Seniors Outreach Services Society  
Seniors Services Society of BC  
SHARE Family and Community Services  
Sooke Region Communities Health Network Cooperative  
South Peace Community Resources Society  
South Vancouver Neighbourhood House  
Squamish Nation Yuustway Health Services  
St. Paul's Foundation of Vancouver  
Sunshine Coast Community Services Society  
Terrace Hospice Society  
The Sharing Farm Society  
Trail FAIR Society  
Valley Community Services Society  
Vancouver Second Mile Society  
Village of Granisle  
Volunteer Cowichan  
Volunteer Terrace  
Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility  
West End Seniors' Network  
Westside Health Network Society  
Whitevalley Community Resource Centre  
Williams Lake & District Seniors Activity Centre  
Yellowhead Community Services Society