

## Better at Home

### Final Report on Community Consultations in the Downtown Eastside

Ron Carten, January 2014

## **Acknowledgements**

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## *Better at Home Program Introduction*

Better at Home is a program that helps seniors with simple day-to-day tasks so that they can continue to live independently in their own homes and remain connected to their communities. The program is funded by the Government of British Columbia and managed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland, with services delivered by a local non-profit organization. The Better at Home program is designed to address the specific needs of local seniors, allowing communities to choose from the following basket of services:

- Friendly visiting
- Transportation to appointments
- Snow shovelling
- Light yard work
- Simple home repairs
- Grocery shopping
- Light housekeeping

The Downtown Eastside of Vancouver has been identified as a potential Better at Home site. Ron Carten was contracted as the community developer to assess community readiness, identify seniors' assets, needs and priorities in regards to the basket of services, and help identify a potential lead organization best suited in the community to deliver the Better at Home program.

This report reflects the findings of the community developer and will be used by the lead organization to design an appropriate local Better at Home program that meets community needs.

## *Community Development Approach*

The Downtown Eastside has the most extensive network of social service and community agencies of any neighbourhood in Vancouver. It was not difficult to find organizations serving seniors and others that were open to collaboration with Better at Home. And this collaboration has put the community developer in contact with innumerable managers and front line workers in these organizations who were instrumental in the execution of this project.

The community development approach used in this project has borrowed heavily from asset based community development as a philosophy and a technique. What this means in practice is the leveraging of relationships not only to set goals but to accomplish the various tasks involved in this project. Relationships have been central to the work because in the final analysis it is people who can determine what dream they want to see become reality and what means they will use to achieve those dreams.

In representing Better at Home the author has striven to communicate his enthusiasm for this project to stakeholders in the neighbourhood. Once the work being done is described to them it turns out that there is no shortage of enthusiasm on the part of community residents and the many front line workers and managers who work with them to meet their needs and build community.

For example, in meeting workers at community centres and other facilities in the Downtown Eastside a vision of stronger more independent seniors was met with deep conversations about the community, its history and its outstanding stories, stories about seniors coming together, about sharing, about mentoring and about groups and individuals who believe in their community and in making healthy community a reality.

These conversations, these dialogues with people, became primary assets in the development of this project. Whether people complained about the cost of living or whether they praised the work of community centre staff, knowledge was being shared and that knowledge formed a basis for our community development.

The author has held several focus groups and other types of meetings in Cantonese, Mandarin and English. Out of the relationships being built individuals came forward to offer interpretation services, snacks and beverages, advice on recruitment for the groups and spaces where the focus groups and meetings could be held.

The individual seniors in our focus groups embodied a commitment to their peers and their community that arose out of their own strength and the strength of their communities. And surprising things were said. Not only expressions of needs and deficits in services in the community came up. Political critiques were articulated,

deep analysis of how a system of home support could affect the larger community.

The community of seniors and service providers in the Downtown Eastside contained many surprises, but what was remarkable was the wealth of strengths and assets that the community contained within it.

Asset based community development thrives on the discovery of deep resources within each community. The Downtown Eastside did not disappoint. Embedded in its multicultural heritage and its history of self help and initiative is a will to create lives, shared lives in community, that was inspiring to the author as a community developer.

### ***Methods***

The community consultation took the form of a tripartite approach to data collection: the use of survey questionnaires (see Appendix B), work in focus groups and data collection at a Community Meeting.

Awareness of the Better at Home program was raised through the posting of informational documents in prominent places at some of the facilities in the Downtown Eastside. Then, the author met with seniors at events such as a town meeting at Carnegie Community Centre and community centre meetings, describing to the seniors there the nature of this community development in their neighbourhood and the Better at Home program, its services, its sliding scale for fees, the search for a lead agency and answering any questions about the program.

After these initial awareness-raising efforts questionnaires were distributed in English and traditional Chinese at several community facilities for completion by facility clients and collection by staff. The response to the questionnaires was low with only 28 questionnaires being returned, those in Chinese being sent for translation. The variety of qualitative and quantitative data collected was quite varied but certain trends in the data did emerge.

Nine focus groups were held, three of them in Chinese with the aid of an interpreter, two in both Chinese and English and four in English only. The focus groups ranged in number from four participants to thirteen and allowed the collection of descriptions of seniors needs and preferences with regard to the Better at Home program that complemented the data collected from the distribution of questionnaires.



**Mural in the Chinatown neighbourhood of the Downtown Eastside**

The identification of the lead agency was begun through consultation with representatives from the various interested agencies in the neighbourhood. These representatives were provided with more detailed information of the Better at Home program from the point of view of service provider.

A stakeholders' meeting was convened on December 13, 2013 with representatives from six local agencies present. As no one lead agency emerged at this meeting a follow-up meeting with the two primary stakeholders interested in being the lead agency was scheduled for January 10, 2013. This meeting produced a verbal understanding on a potential partnership and both agencies agreed meet to discuss a memorandum of agreement in one week's time.

## ***Community Profile***

### ***Geography***

The Downtown Eastside is located on the shores of Burrard Inlet in the city of Vancouver. It is approximately bounded by Cambie Street to the west, the waterfront to the north, Clark Street to the east and Malkin Avenue to the south. It is relatively flat in contour and covers an area of 205 hectares (Newnham, 2005).

In the north the neighbourhood is primarily industrial, crossed by railroad tracks and occupied by docks warehousing container shipments from the large ships

that enter Burrard Inlet. Bordering the industrial district are the Gastown and Oppenheimer areas, the former primarily commercial and the latter primarily residential. The south, known as the Strathcona neighbourhood, is primarily residential with single family dwellings predominating. Chinatown, to the southwest is a vibrant commercial district with some residential housing. The central artery through the Downtown Eastside is East Hastings Street, characterized by mixed commercial enterprises and residential apartments for much of the length of the street in the neighbourhood.

## ***History***

For countless generations the Coast Salish peoples have called the area occupied by the Downtown Eastside home. The Sto:Lo people named this area “s’olhtemxw”, meaning “our land” or “our world” (Newnham, 2005).

The Downtown Eastside is one of Vancouver’s oldest neighbourhoods. The settler community founded Hastings Mill and Granville (now Gastown) in the mid-nineteenth century. Chinatown was established in the 1880’s as Chinese immigrants came to North America to work in mineral prospecting, on railroad construction and in the service industry. A Japanese settlement was established in the north of the neighbourhood now known as Oppenheimer in the 1890s (DTES, 2012).

By the turn of the twentieth century the Downtown Eastside was considered the central core of the city of Vancouver. It was populated by businesses and banks, government buildings and residential housing. It was also a home to men working in the resource industries who came here from the hinterlands when they were on leave from their work. As a result, many of the current SRO (single room occupancy) hotels sprang up with numerous drinking establishments to serve the working men. The legacy of these SROs plays a significant role in the quality of life of current residents of the neighbourhood, furnishing the area with several drinking establishments and low-cost housing primarily for individuals on social assistance.

The Downtown Eastside has a long history of social activism from demonstrations in the thirties and sixties, to community organizing from the 1970s to the present. The Downtown Eastside Residents Association (DERA), a long-time force for change in the neighbourhood, was founded in 1973. The Downtown Eastside Women’s Centre was founded shortly after. The Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association launched a successful bid in the late 1960s to stop the building of a freeway through the neighbourhood, which permanently changed the city politics for decades. Agencies such as the Salvation Army, Lookout Emergency Aid Society, Rain City Housing, the Portland Hotel Society as well as the Strathcona, Ray-Cam and Carnegie community centres have all played significant roles in shaping and supporting the Downtown Eastside community. North America’s first and only supervised injection site,

Insite, was established here in 2003 to help combat the spread of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis.

In 1992 Woodward's department store, a long time anchor of shopping activity in the Downtown Eastside went out of business and parts of the neighbourhood, particularly along Hastings Street, went into serious and deep social decline. The Woodward's squat of 2002 led to a commitment by the city of Vancouver to revitalize the Downtown Eastside by renovating Woodward's for social housing and social enterprise. The Vancouver Agreement, a partnership of the federal, provincial and municipal governments marshalled resources in the struggle of the Downtown Eastside to cope with social problems and ensure an enduring home for the neighbourhood's low-income residents. The neighbourhood is currently undergoing change in many directions. More social housing is being developed including the renovation of SRO hotels while a process of gentrification characterized by the building of condominiums and entrance of high-end businesses into the neighbourhood is a subject of much controversy.

### ***Demographics***

The Downtown Eastside has a population of approximately 18,000. Of those 18,000 residents 60% are male and 40% are female. In Strathcona this skewed proportion returns to a roughly 50/50 split. 21% of the population is over the age of 65 and 31% of the population is between the ages of 45 and 65, one of the highest proportions of seniors in Vancouver (DTES, 2012). Because of social problems and endemic health issues the self-identification of seniors, sometimes based on a factor of increasing disability, is younger than in other localities. Someone struggling with HIV/AIDS or hepatitis, TB or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (health conditions more common in the Downtown Eastside than in other neighbourhoods of Vancouver) may self-identify as a senior earlier in his or her life than someone who typically does not suffer from such ailments living in another locality.

Correspondingly, life expectancy in the Downtown Eastside, particularly for men is significantly shorter than in the city of Vancouver as a whole. The life expectancy for women in the Downtown Eastside is 84.5 years compared to 85.1 years for Vancouver as a whole. The life expectancy for men is 73.8 years compared with 80 years in Vancouver as a whole (DTES, 2012). What it means to be a senior in Downtown Eastside differs from what it means in other parts of the city.

This is reflected in the fact that seniors programs at the Carnegie Community Centre are open to individuals who are 45 years of age or older. It is reflected in the visible presence of a higher proportion of disabled people travelling the streets of the Downtown Eastside. And it is reflected in lower incomes in the neighbourhood which makes it harder for residents to meet their daily needs. One study reports that 13% of the population here is "in crisis", meaning

individuals who have no permanent home, present behavioural and health problems and are not well-connected to services (Miewald et al., 2009).

### ***Gender***

Only 40% of the Downtown Eastside is female. While the gender split in Strathcona and Chinatown is roughly 50-50, the remainder of the neighbourhood is skewed toward a predominance of males. Women's issues such as housing, personal security, income and family welfare remain crucial to many of the neighbourhood's women.

The number of senior women over the age of 80 years is 30% more than the number of men (City of Vancouver, 2013). In addition, women seniors access services more than do men. For example, female seniors were two times more likely to get help with transportation or running errands than male seniors. (Turcotte, 2007) Further, the incomes of Canadian women seniors are lower than that of men by approximately \$2,000 per year. (Turcotte, 2007) Common reasons given for unmet home support needs among seniors have included not only a lack of availability of services but also an inability to pay for those services. (Hoover, 2012) Again in particular for women seniors this is supportive of the implementation of the Better at Home program, which is premised on a sliding scale for service fees allowing the program to reach those in need who report an inability to pay for services.

### ***Ethnicity***

The Downtown Eastside is not nearly as homogenous in its demographics as other neighbourhoods in Vancouver. 50% of the population speaks English with Chinese being the second largest language group. Immigrant demographics match Vancouver as a whole but the distribution of immigrant groups is very uneven. Chinatown and Strathcona have large immigrant groups, including Chinese, Ukrainian, Russian, Italian and Jewish, while other areas to the north are mostly non-immigrant, including a First Nations cohort that makes up 14% of the population (DTES, 2012). This ethnic split can be seen as a division between the north, non-immigrant, portion of the neighbourhood and the south, immigrant, portion of the neighbourhood, although there is a significant mixing of ethnic groups geographically as well.

### ***Housing and Income***

In the north of the neighbourhood, most of the single room occupancy (SRO) hotels are located. Emergency shelters and many of the social services in the neighbourhood are also located in the north.

Rates of unemployment are higher in the Downtown Eastside than in the rest of the city and rates of educational attainment are lower than in the rest of the city

(Newnham, 2005). The Downtown Eastside has a high number of homeless individuals. To meet these challenges there is a large number of free or low-cost food facilities in the neighbourhood as well as agencies from outside the neighbourhood who come in to provide food on the street. (DTES, 2012)

The median household income in the Downtown Eastside is \$13,691. This is less than 30% of incomes in the rest of the city. The percentage of individuals who are considered low income is 55.3% (based on the after tax low-income cut-off) (DTES, 2012). The housing in the neighbourhood is composed of approximately 90% apartments. And of the houses in the neighbourhood, 88% are rented and 12% are owned. 51% of the population here pays more than 30% of household income on rent as compared to 23% of the population in the rest of Vancouver (DTES, 2012).

Of the rental housing types 29% are rented at market rates (~\$809/mo.) or owned, 32% are non-market (or subsidized) self-contained apartments, 9% are non-market SROs, 24% are private SROs and 6% are community care facility units. In other words, 47% of housing is subsidized for the poor. 33% of renters do not have kitchens or bathrooms inside their apartments and must share these facilities (DTES, 2012).

The implication of all this is that poverty is a daily lived reality for thousands of people in the Downtown Eastside. Feedback from focus groups held in the course of community consultations in the neighbourhood indicates that finding adequate housing is a major issue for seniors. This is despite the fact that approximately 40% of social housing in the neighbourhood is targeted to seniors.

Looking inside the housing issues in the Downtown Eastside we find that of social housing residents 55% are 55 years old or older. 77% are over 45 years of age. 72% of social housing residents have incomes of less than \$15,000 per year. And 79% of these residents reported health concerns with 47% reporting multiple health concerns. Of those living in SRO hotels 79% are male and 89% are Caucasian or Aboriginal (Lewis, et al., 2008). 62% of residents in the Downtown Eastside live alone of whom approximately half are over age 55 (BIA, 2012).

## ***Services***

In anticipation of the community consultations that were conducted it was found that Canadian seniors reported that housework (including home maintenance) was the most common form of home care with 18% of seniors surveyed reporting a resort to this form of help. Transportation was second at 15% and meal preparation was third at 10%. 4% of seniors reported at least one “unmet need for professional home care services”. This Canadian statistic is likely much higher in the Downtown Eastside. Common reasons for seniors’ unmet needs included an inability to pay and lack of service availability. Overall, seniors living alone resorted to home care services 12% more than seniors who lived with

someone else. Clearly, isolation is a factor contributing to the need for home support services. Likewise, lower income seniors in BC were more likely to use home support. Isolated and lower income seniors use home support services more than the general population of seniors. Seniors over 85 use significantly more home support services than younger seniors (Hoover, 2012).



**Entrance to the Community Meeting at Carnegie Centre**

### ***Community Assets***

The Downtown Eastside contains a wide variety of services and programs to meet the needs of its diverse population. Asian immigrants, Aboriginals and other non-immigrants live and work within a colourful community that carries on its daily life despite low-incomes, health complications and social problems. In fact, it is these challenges faced by neighbourhood residents that have given rise to

community organizing and the development of the wide array of services found within its borders.

The landmarks for community services are comprised of the three community centres situated within the neighbourhood. The Carnegie Community Centre, with a long and illustrious history is located at the corner of Main Street and Hastings Street in the heart of the community. The Strathcona Community Centre, located to the east serves the largely residential area characterized by an Asian immigrant community; and the Ray-Cam Community Centre, further east offers residents of that area a place for coming together to share communal activities. Among the services offered at these facilities are a gymnasiums, fitness equipment, meeting rooms, a low-cost cafeteria and seniors programs such as ESL, yoga and tai chi, musical events, games and outings in the community.

Health services are provided by three clinics, The Pender Community Health Clinic located near the western edge of the Downtown Eastside, Vancouver Native Health Clinic in the centre of the neighbourhood and the Downtown Community Health Clinic in the Oppenheimer district of the neighbourhood. These clinics provide primary health care, treatment and education for diabetes, HIV, foot care and immunization among other services. Insite, the safe injection site for IV drug users has also been providing an important health service to the community for over ten years now and Harbourlight Detox Unit works to assist individuals with an addiction meet the challenge of a clean and sober life that eludes a significant minority within the neighbourhood.

Emergency shelters run by Lookout Emergency Aid Society, Rain City Housing, the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre and the Salvation Army are located within easy access to meet the needs of those in the neighbourhood who find themselves homeless. Meals are provided at these facilities as well. The neighbourhood has numerous social housing buildings for seniors such as Veterans Manor, the Jeffrey Ross Residence, Orange Lodge and Smith-Yuen apartments. BC Housing also provides other housing including that for seniors. Also, The Bloom Group, formerly St. James Community Services Society, runs two hospice programs, May's Place and Cottage Hospice, for end of life care.

The neighbourhood is home to the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre at Columbia and Cordova Streets which provides a variety of services and program to women of all ages, including an emergency shelter, a drop-in, and Chinese Seniors Outreach program. The Aboriginal Friendship Centre located just beyond the eastern border of the neighbourhood is a vital resource for Aboriginals in the Downtown Eastside.

Free and low-cost meals can be had at Union Gospel Mission, the Salvation Army, Vancouver Second Mile Society, the Living Room drop-in, Evelyne Saller

Centre, Carnegie Centre, 1<sup>st</sup> United Church and at other locations, many of these establishments being located near the centre of the Downtown Eastside.

Several drop-in centres such as the Vancouver Second Mile Society, the Living Room and the Dugout are complemented by numerous Asian benevolent Associations such as Shon Yee Benevolent Association and the Chinese Benevolent Association. These organizations provide support and a place to gather for seniors in the neighbourhood.

In addition to all these services and programs the Downtown Eastside succeeded some years ago in building Crab Park along the waterfront at the foot of Main Street. Sun Yat Sen Gardens also provides a relaxing oasis of greenery in the urban background of the neighbourhood.

The Chinese Community Policing Centre provides policing services in Cantonese and Mandarin as well as in English. Pigeon Park savings provides low-cost banking services to residents as well. The Carnegie Centre has a library connected to the Vancouver Public Library system. And Gallery Gachet on Cordova near Columbia Street provides one among several spaces for art to be displayed and enjoyed by Downtown Eastside residents.

Finally, Chinatown is home to numerous grocery stores, barber shops, pharmacies and cafes catering to all residents of the neighbourhood. Sunrise Market on Powell and Gore Streets is another one of many markets for vegetables and meat, often with a focus on Asian foods that serve residents of the community.

### ***Seniors Needs (Community Consultation Data)***

As the community consultations were largely based on the Better at Home survey template this report organizes the data according to the questionnaire format (found in Appendix B at the end of this report).

The data is listed according to survey question. As there was not a significant difference among focus group and face-to-face surveys responses the two sets of responses are combined in the tables below according to frequency of response in some cases. In addition, data collected at the Better at Home Community Meeting held on December 13, 2013 is listed in separate tables.

#### **What are the main issues to keep seniors living longer in their own homes?**

Main Issues	Description
Independence	Seniors did not want to be sent to long term care housing

Mobility	Seniors faced mobility issues within their homes and outside in the community
Loneliness	
Housekeeping	
Safety and security	Concern about crime was expressed by several focus group members
Pests	Cockroaches, bedbugs, rodents
Nutrition	
Aboriginal needs	Sensitivity to Aboriginal issues was a concern in several focus groups
Falls	
Poverty	Many focus group participants were living on low fixed incomes
Housing	Security of housing and finding housing was an issue
Family	Connection to family was very important
Grocery shopping	Tied to mobility concerns
Physical fitness	
Language barriers	Many Chinese seniors had difficulty navigating the health care system in a second language
Medical care	
Weather	Challenging weather was a concern for mobility
Prescription drugs	Accessing affordable prescription drugs was a concern
Volunteer opportunities	Seniors wanted to be able to participate in community events and programs through volunteering
Trust	Seniors in the Downtown Eastside have difficulty trusting service providers and other authorities
Peace and quiet	Some sections of the community are noisy, particularly at night due to drug and sex trade activities
Respect	Some seniors felt that younger service providers in the community did not always demonstrate respect
Community	Seniors want to know who their neighbours are and to develop relationships within the community
Used needles	Risk of puncture wounds and disease were a concern for seniors

## Discussion

Independence, mobility and loneliness were the most common issues mentioned by seniors and were related to one another in that diminishing mobility threatened seniors' independent living by rendering them less capable of looking after their own homes and meeting their needs. As well as death or relocation of seniors' friends, acquaintances and family members, decreased mobility left seniors more isolated and hence lonelier than they otherwise were.

Safety and security was a concern for seniors in the Downtown Eastside given the neighbourhood's high crime rate and open drug and alcohol use. Seniors in the Downtown Eastside are unique in facing this issue on a daily basis more than seniors in other neighbourhoods in the city. Likewise, the Downtown Eastside is also distinguished by pest infestation in many of its older buildings. While many landlords regularly utilize pest control services some of the older SRO hotels in the neighbourhood are not so well served and the variety of tenants, some often leading transient lifestyles, adds to the risk of pest infestation.

Poverty, another issue mentioned in focus groups, is a factor relating to pests infestation, crime and lifestyles of community residents that disturb the peace and quiet of seniors. Poverty affects many aspects of life for seniors. It is a major determinant of health and is associated with illiteracy, poor nutrition, barriers to accessing prescriptions, inadequate clothing and housing as well as emotional stress and social isolation.

The community of Aboriginal seniors is larger in the Downtown Eastside than anywhere else in the city and many expressed their concern that services would not take their cultural ways of living into account. Aboriginal seniors expressed a strong wish to be served by other Aboriginals and at the very least that those who serve them be trained in the cultural competence skills needed to interact with Aboriginal seniors respectfully and sensitively.

Seniors were also concerned with the ever-present risk of falls and injuries associated with falling. This can be associated with seniors' concerns about physical fitness and facilities where equipment and trainers could provide them with the activities needed to maintain their physical fitness, balance and flexibility.

Language barriers faced by resident seniors whose mother tongue is Cantonese or Mandarin were a frequently mentioned concern for Chinese seniors. In particular, Chinese seniors expressed the wish for translation services to navigate the health care system. This ties in with the identification of medical care as a central issue for aging seniors. Prescription drug costs and delivery services were also mentioned by seniors as being very important to their independence.

Nutrition and grocery shopping were also significant issues for seniors. Certainly, the inability to get groceries in a timely way can affect nutrition. And nutrition itself is essential for maintaining optimum health and well being for seniors. Poverty also plays a role in seniors being unable to meet their nutritional needs, as does diminished mobility and challenging weather conditions.

Housing, its security of tenure and simply overcoming homelessness were major issues for seniors in the Downtown Eastside. In addressing social problems of any kind housing first is the essential building block in helping seniors overcome the many challenges they face – from nutrition to safety and security and health in general, seniors’ focus on housing validates the local interest in more affordable housing in the Downtown Eastside.

**What services and programs are currently offered that help seniors live longer in their homes – and who provides them?**

Services and programs	Provider
House cleaning, maintenance and snow removal	Property manager
After care for surgery	Hospital
Group shopping	Chinese Freemasons’ Society
Dancing	SUCCESS
Tai Chi	Chinese Cultural Centre
Handy Dart	Translink
Housing	Lookout and other agencies
Home support	Government
Tea and coffee for women	Franciscan Sisters
Annual bus pass	
Low costs groceries	Quest
Community centres	
Women’s centre	
Free meals	Crabtree Corner
Low cost meals	Evelyne Saller
Diabetes talks and medical treatment	Downtown Community Health Clinic
Drop-in	The Dugout
Women’s programs	Union Gospel Mission
Medical appointment accompaniment	Neighbourhood Helpers
Grocery shopping and food hampers	Neighbourhood Helpers
Bingo, meals, activities and outings	Downtown Eastside Women’s Centre
Care for sex trade workers	WISH
Pest control services	Neighbourhood Helpers
Aboriginal Friendship Centre	
Grocery shopping and menu planning	Mission Possible
Shopping trips	Evelyne Saller

Health care	Pender Clinic and Downtown Community Health Centre
Low-cost banking	Pigeon Park Savings
Coffee and breakfast	1 <sup>st</sup> United Church
BC Housing	
Personal care	Vancouver Coastal Health
Cleaning and transportation	Capacity Links
Food preparation	Vancouver Coastal Health
Medication	Vancouver Coastal Health
Morning health check for residents	Ray-Cam Community Centre
Monthly breakfast	BC Housing
Grocery shopping	NICCSS
Home support workers	Greater Vancouver Community Services Society
Vancouver Second Mile Society	
Mental Health	Strathcona Mental Health Team
Living Room drop-in	Lookout Emergency Aid Society
Friendly visiting	
Meals at home	Meals on Wheels
Drop-in nurses	Vancouver Coastal Health

### **Community Meeting Data**

#### **What services are currently working well to keep seniors independent in their homes and engaged in the community?**

- Library
- Ray-Cam Community Centre
- Strathcona Community Centre
- Japanese Park
- Social events
- English classes
- Bingo
- Bus passes
- Clinic
- BC Housing
- Volunteering
- Carnegie Community Centre
- Translation services
- Home care services
- Access to family doctor
- In home medical supports (in some buildings)
- Safety checks in buildings – morning check/outreach tag programs
- Handy Dart

- Drop-ins
- Seniors buddying up together
- Workers that build relationships with seniors and monitor for concerns
- Follow-up after hospital – after care

## Discussion

Services to support home-bound seniors such as housekeeping, personal care, grocery shopping, hospital after-care and safety checks for elderly residents are among some of the most important programs seniors identified. These services were generally accessible although some seniors remarked that home support services were not provided unless they were on an income assistance program of some kind.

Recreational and educational programs in the community included ESL classes, the public library, dancing, tai chi, outings, activities, diabetes workshops and women’s programs. These programs met seniors’ social needs but were sometimes associated with fees charged by the agencies providing the programs.

Programs aimed at alleviating the effects of poverty included free and low-cost meals, community centres, drop-in centres, bus passes, low-cost banking and low-cost groceries. Accessibility to these kinds of programs was generally good.

Volunteer opportunities, seniors buddying up and relationships with workers sensitive to seniors needs foster a sense of social inclusion and generally have no fees acting as barriers to accessibility.

Translation services meet the needs of the Downtown Eastside’s large immigrant population. While no discussion of fees came up in focus groups it is likely that some translation services have fees attached.

### **What non-medical home support services from the Better at Home basket of services are needed?**

Service	Frequency
Light housekeeping	53
Grocery shopping	43
Simple home repairs	28
Light yard work	13
Friendly visiting	38
Transportation to appointments	39
Snow shovelling	17

## Community Meeting Data

Service	Frequency
Light housekeeping	34
Grocery shopping	15
Simple home repairs	4
Light yard work	0
Friendly visiting	19
Transportation to appointments	30
Snow shovelling	0

### List of preferred services from the Better at Home basket of services:

1. Light housekeeping
2. Transportation to appointments
3. Grocery shopping
4. Friendly visiting
5. Simple home repairs
6. Snow shovelling
7. Light yard work

### Discussion

The above prioritization of preferred Better at Home services is based on the combined focus group and face-to-face surveys, as well as data collected in the community meeting. In the latter data at the community meeting, meeting participants were given three votes each to select the services most important to them. In the focus groups and survey data participants were allowed to select any or all of the services in the Better at Home basket.

Light housekeeping, transportation to appointments, grocery shopping and friendly visiting were selected much more frequently than the remaining services of simple home repairs, snow shovelling and light yard work. This is consistent with the housing demographic of Downtown Eastside residents in which the vast majority of resident seniors rent their homes. As renters, seniors' home repairs and snow shovelling are done by their property manager and few renters have any yard in which work could be done.

Light housekeeping was by far the most popular service indicating that seniors are most concerned with the condition of their homes. The lower ranking of transportation and grocery shopping suggests that the smaller geographic area of the Downtown Eastside makes it relatively easier for seniors to access what they need in their own neighbourhood than seniors in other geographically larger neighbourhoods. Many amenities in the Downtown Eastside are within walking distance or are only a short bus ride away.

**What non-medical home support services not listed above do you think are needed?**

- Housekeeping
- Interpretation services (Chinese/English)
- Activities for seniors
- Food preparation
- Transportation to appointments
- Hair cuts
- Building mobility ramps in homes
- Accompaniment to grocery shopping
- Out-trips/day-trips
- Affordable housing
- Protection against harassment
- Bathing and personal care
- Musical events
- Dancing
- Bingo
- Interest-free loans for home maintenance
- Better health education
- Attendant or nurse in building for seniors' check-ins
- Grief counselling
- Support in banking (security accompaniment)
- Tailoring and clothes mending
- Support in getting seasonal clothing
- Pest control
- Services for the deaf
- Leaf clearing
- Used needle pick-up
- Cooking
- Training in cultural competence
- Help with small household tasks (e.g. changing light bulbs)
- Dog walking
- Exercise facilities

**Discussion**

Clearly seniors have a wide variety of needs ranging from clothes mending to grief counselling. Housekeeping, interpretation services, haircuts, grocery shopping and access to activities figured most prominently among them as well as transportation and food preparation at home. A few of the services appear to be more particular to the realities of the Downtown Eastside. Among them accompaniment to banking for security, used needle pick-up, interpretation services, tailoring and mending clothes and training in cultural competence. The

need for haircuts and support in getting seasonal clothing also point up the low incomes of residents in the neighbourhood. Many of these proposed services fall outside the basket of Better at Home services, however they do indicate the scope of needs that seniors in the Downtown Eastside feel are important to them.

**What criteria would be important for a strong lead organization to offer Better at Home services?**

Criteria	Description
Caring/Compassion	The agency must embody compassion and its workers must be caring
Local agency	Local agency would understand local seniors needs
Effective communication	This includes both multi-lingual capacity and cultural competence
Cultural competence with Aboriginals	Owing to the large Aboriginal population in the area, this should be a priority
Training	Agency needs training capacity and workers should be well trained
Continuity of service	Seniors should not have to deal with a new worker every month
Responsibility	Agency should be accountable for the performance of its workers
Experience with seniors	Agency needs a track record with seniors
Ability to make referrals	Workers and agency should be able to refer client seniors to appropriate services according to perceived need
Building relationships	Workers should be adept at building trusting and respectful relationships with seniors
Flexibility	Agency service must be flexible to meet seniors priorities
Risk assessment capacity	Workers should be trained to respond to emergencies and to assess and report risks and threats seniors may be facing
Reliability	Agency workers should be punctual and reliable
Bonded workers	Agency workers must be checked and certified that they are trustworthy
Honesty	
An established agency	The agency should be well known in the community
Has necessary resources	Agency should have the capacity to fulfill its responsibilities

Non-judgemental	Service should be non-judgemental
Identification cards	Workers should be easily identifiable to seniors
Teamwork and consensus building	Agency should practice teamwork and develop consensus as a method of reaching decisions
Common sense	
Confidentiality	
Initiative	Workers should work hard and find the work that needs to be done
Government certified	
Mental health and addictions	Agency and workers must have an understanding of mental health and substance abuse issues among seniors
Advisory committee	The advisory committee should have broad community representation as well as a capacity to operate in Chinese
Phone contact	Agency should have a central phone line that also has capacity in Chinese
Night service	Agency should have a service for night-time emergencies
Familiar and trustworthy	Workers should embody these values
Accommodates disabilities	Agency should have the capacity to respond effectively to individuals with disabilities
Understanding of family issues	
Effective matching	Agency must appropriately match service provider with senior client
Responsiveness	Agency and workers must be responsive to seniors needs as they are expressed
Outreach	Agency needs to practice outreach to seniors who do not already know about Better at Home
Transportation capacity	
Strategic plan	Agency needs a strategic plan to implement Better at Home services
Preventative services	Agency must find ways to prevent crisis and conflict rather than cut off services peremptorily
Hiring local seniors/peers	
Coordination of services	Agency must provide services in a logical and seamless way
Accountability	Seniors should be able to communicate their concerns to workers and managers

Government mandate	Agency should be funded by government or a charity and should be certified
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**Discussion**

Above all seniors want Better at Home services to be familiar, reliable and trustworthy. They want services in multiple languages and services with sensitivity to Aboriginal culture. They also want workers who take initiative and work hard as well as being accountable to the values of their agency, which seniors have identified as compassion, honesty and flexibility. Seniors want their needs met in an organized and efficient way that will make them comfortable with the services they are receiving. And they want their agency to be smart. This means that the agency can make referrals if other needs of seniors are not being met, if they are at risk physically, medically or with respect to their housing and its quality. The agency should have a solid track record of working with seniors and should understand what seniors’ concerns are. Moreover, the advisory committee should be representative of seniors in the neighbourhood and have multi-lingual capacity.

*Opportunities for Service Integration/Coordination*

Two agencies had stepped forward as potential lead agencies They were the Network of Inner City Community Services Society (NICCSS) and SUCCESS. Both agencies have experience in delivering home support services, NICCSS through its Community Links program and SUCCESS through its prior Better at Home grant in Surrey. NICCSS delivers housekeeping, grocery shopping and friendly visiting services through its Capacity Links program in Vancouver’s east side. SUCCESS provides seniors’ housing, activities, tax form filing, translation services and settlement services in the Downtown Eastside. It also delivers, through its Better at Home programming, housekeeping, transportation, grocery shopping and friendly visiting services in Surrey.

NICCSS operates as the hub of a network of community organizations, determining through continual consultation with those agencies the needs of the community and priorities for service delivery. SUCCESS operates more independently as a much larger agency than NICCSS, delivering its services through its many branches throughout the province. In some ways, these two agencies complement one another – NICCSS, with its connection to other agencies, its services to Aboriginals and other vulnerable populations and SUCCESS through its extensive volunteer, administrative and funding resources, as well as through its demonstrated multicultural expertise.

In one of the community consultation stakeholder meetings, SUCCESS and NICCSS were considering dividing between them the four services prioritized through the community development’s seniors’ consultation process. However this proposal did not survive negotiations between the two agencies.

Nevertheless, in the determination of population needs and priorities NICCSS has extensive contacts in the community through its consortium of agencies, while SUCCESS brings a long-term and deep connection with the immigrant community in determining seniors' needs. Both approaches could work effectively in identifying the client base for Better at Home in the Downtown Eastside.

## *Community Readiness*

There are a number of services and programs already in the Downtown Eastside that support isolated seniors to live in their home, for example the Capacity Links program, the Neighbourhood Helpers program, Vancouver Coastal Health's home support program, the home support program of Greater Vancouver Community Services society, and others. Despite this extensive coverage, many seniors identified a need for more home support services and this has been confirmed in conversations with stakeholders such as NICCSS and Pender Community Health Clinic, both of whom provide forms of home support to seniors in the Downtown Eastside and who were excited by the prospect of Better at Home coming to the neighbourhood.

Consultations with local agencies in a position to deliver Better at Home services revealed four primary organizations with an interest in this.

The Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House was interested in Better at Home but did not have the resources, adequate volunteer base or infrastructure to take on the contract as a whole. Rather the Neighbourhood House was interested in delivering one particular service – grocery shopping – owing to its current focus on food security in the Downtown Eastside. While the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House did not attend one of the stakeholder meetings and appeared to have dropped out of the process, it would be worthwhile exploring contact with NICCSS to offer handling food security issues and possibly joining the NICCSS consortium in order to be linked into further development of Better at Home in the Downtown Eastside.

The Vancouver Second Mile Society, a seniors' organization geographically near the Neighbourhood House, appeared to be a good fit but consultation revealed that Vancouver Second Mile Society was not in a position to be the lead agency for Better at Home. Despite successfully running the Neighbourhood Helpers program in the Downtown Eastside and South Granville neighbourhoods, VSMS felt it was too small to take the lead and lacked the resources to do this. Further discussion revealed that VSMS had overestimated the size of the Better at Home program but VSMS did not step forward.

NICCSS, a consortium of some 25 agencies on the east side of Vancouver, currently runs the Capacity Links program which provides home support in the

form of housekeeping, grocery shopping and friendly visiting. As such, it has the experience in the Downtown Eastside of delivering a program very similar to Better at Home. It practices in-house training for its workers and has a volunteer base adequate to the demands of the Better at Home program. Its extensive links in the community allow it to identify where the need is greatest for seniors and how best to meet those needs. NICCSS has expressed a keen interest in delivering Better at Home services in the Downtown Eastside and has demonstrated some planning for fulfilling the Better at Home grant in consultations.

SUCCESS, a social service agency with a forty-year history in the Lower Mainland and an extensive network of offices in British Columbia, has also expressed an interest in being the lead agency for Better at Home. The agency has demonstrated experience of delivering the Better at Home program in Surrey and has been funded as the lead agency for Hastings Sunrise neighbourhood of Vancouver. In addition to being familiar with the requirements of Better at Home, it has an extensive volunteer base and training program for volunteers. Its home base is in Chinatown in the Downtown Eastside and it is open to partnership as it is already partnering with another agency for Better at Home in Surrey.

### *Potential Risks Going Forward*

The population of the Downtown Eastside is varied ethnically, by gender distribution and by income as mentioned above. There is a concern that meeting the needs of all groups including Chinese immigrants both poor and more affluent, Aboriginals, other non-immigrant groups including working and unemployed, social housing versus SRO-based residents and those in core housing need will be a challenge.

Because some for profit home support agencies work in the neighbourhood and because the neighbourhood has such a large population of low-income immigrants and non-immigrants in varying housing situations, an emphasis on serving those most in need, meaning low-income, isolated seniors has arisen. How this orientation will be sustained while other non-prioritized seniors attempt to access Better at Home through a central call-in number is undetermined as yet. So, the identification of the client base for Better at Home remains problematic.

Another issue related to the identification of a low-income client base is the cost-effective use of resources within budget constraints, given that most, if not all, clients assessed on a sliding scale will most likely be eligible for services at a 100% subsidy. Given the costs of training and compensating service providers, this rate of subsidy applied nearly universally will deplete grant funding more quickly than if services were provided to client seniors who qualified for partial or no subsidy at all, as might be the case in other more affluent communities across

the province. The result may be a smaller client base than in some other communities.

Other risks involve the widespread existence of mental health and substance-abuse issues within the seniors' community of the Downtown Eastside. How the lead agency or partnership will deal with behavioural problems related to these two issues has not been explicitly discussed to this point. Agency practices must be developed that work toward the prevention of cutting off services to seniors based on behavioural issues. Attention will have to be sharply focussed on how seniors are matched with their service providers and on training for service providers in dealing with behavioural issues arising out of mental health and substance-abuse concerns.

A related mental health concern is that of seniors who practice hoarding. In some seniors' homes hoarding can reach crisis proportions and this practice is currently regarded as a mental health issue. For a housekeeper entering the home of such a senior special training will be needed so that the housekeeping or friendly visitor will respond sensitively to the anxieties and feelings of a senior who hoards.

One reality that residents of the Downtown Eastside must live with is the risk of needle puncture injuries. Because of the incidence of IV drug use in the neighbourhood the risk of contracting HIV or Hepatitis C through a needle puncture is heightened. Service providers need to be aware of this risk and of their right to refuse unsafe work. Additionally, seniors whose homes are considered unsafe need to be provided with the means of making their homes safe so that they are not excluded from the benefit of Better at Home services.

Another concern is that of pest infestation. Unfortunately, the Downtown Eastside is currently experiencing widespread pest problems in the form of cockroaches, rodents and bed bugs. Protocols need to be established around how a housekeeper or friendly visitor responds to evidence of pest infestation. Should the service provider be able to opt out of entering the senior's home if it is infested? Who should be alerted with regard to engaging pest control services? How is the right to receive services balanced against the right of a service provider to have a safe and hygienic work environment?

Finally, while the Downtown is largely a tolerant community, the issue of racism should not go unattended. Incidents of racial discrimination against immigrant seniors have recently become a focus of community concern. In addition, the Aboriginal community has a long historical experience of racial discrimination directed against its members. It is essential that service providers for Better at Home in the Downtown Eastside receive training around issues of racism so that conflicts that may arise between client seniors and service providers can be prevented or, failing that, can be dealt with sensitively both by service providers and by management of the lead agency. Training in cultural competence was

recommended during consultations with seniors in the community. Seniors have a right to feel comfortable and respected in their homes and service providers have a right to be treated with respect as well.



**Cantonese interpreter works with the community developer**

### ***Proposed Lead Organization***

Through consultations in three successive stakeholders' meetings it has become clear that SUCCESS and NICCSS are unable to form the hoped for partnership. Consequently, NICCSS remains as the sole agency willing and able to take on the delivery of Better at Home services in the Downtown Eastside. With its unique consortium model of consultation and decision-making NICCSS is well placed to do this. Moreover, NICCSS can build upon its experience delivering home support services through its Capacity Links program.

It is hoped that SUCCESS can continue to support the Better at Home program in the Downtown Eastside in other ways and that it can be involved in the program in the future. SUCCESS remains a key player in the community and seniors in the community will be better served if the organization is involved in some way down the road.

This report, however, proposes that NICCSS be awarded the Better at Home grant for the Downtown Eastside.

## *Recommendations and Next Steps*

Many of the detailed recommendations regarding the delivery of Better at Home services in the Downtown Eastside are included in the “Potential Risks Going Forward” section in this report. Through its work with Capacity Links NICCSS is likely well aware of many of those risks in implementing Better at Home in the Downtown Eastside.

The potential to enhance and develop NICCSS’s Capacity Links program which serves seniors in the Downtown Eastside certainly exists. As well, building upon the training and on-the-job skills and experience of Capacity Links program workers seems to fit well into a plan for implementing Better at Home. With respect to the NICCSS consortium, partners in the consortium could benefit from their participation, through referral and consultation, in the Better at Home program. There is the potential for reaching out to more seniors, be they aging Chinese seniors, Aboriginal elders or other non-immigrant seniors’ populations.

What is left for NICCSS is the successful launch of Better at Home in the Downtown Eastside. This would include extensive publication of its intent to deliver the program through advertising, an official launch event and the collaboration of its member agencies. The local MLA could also be involved in the launch of the program as well as other agencies not specifically members of NICCSS but who might see themselves as stakeholders with respect to the target population of seniors.

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## Appendices

### **A: Seniors' Asset Map for the Downtown Eastside**

#### **Emergency Police/Fire/Ambulance**

Ph. 911

#### **Transportation**

##### **Translink**

[www.translink.ca](http://www.translink.ca)

Ph. 604-953-3333

Connects seniors to the region through a sustainable transportation network consisting of:

Buses

Skytrain

Seabus

West Coast Express

Handydart – a regular fare disability supportive bus service. Ph. 604-575-6600

Taxi savers – Coupons that can be purchased. \$100 value for \$50 cost

HandyCard

Compass card – the Compass card is the new reloadable debit-type card for transit use that will replace bus tickets in the Fall.

BC Bus Pass Program – provides a universal bus pass for low-income seniors

Ph. 1-866-866-0800 or visit [www.eia.gov.bc.ca/programs/bus-pass.html](http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/programs/bus-pass.html)

Translink services feature reserved seats for seniors and personal scooters as well as wheelchair accessible loading ramps.

##### **BC Driver's License**

2750 Commercial Drive, Vancouver

Ph. 604-661-2255

#### **Community Centres**

##### **Vancouver Second Mile Society**

509 East Hastings Street, Vancouver

Ph. 604-254-2194

Seniors' Centre

Meals

Leisure activities

Neighbourhood Helpers – Outreach to seniors program

Information and referral

Seniors' day trips

**Strathcona Community Centre**

601 Keefer Street, Vancouver

Ph. 604-713-1838

Fitness centre

Arts, health and seniors' program

Chinese calligraphy

Karaoke

Seniors' luncheon

18-form Qigong

Line dancing

Five-animal health care exercise

Seniors folk dance

Seniors tai chi

Wellness drop-in: blood pressure check, exercise, health talks, etc.

Wu's tai chi

Yuen kek dance

Investing workshops

Music and singing classes

Community kitchen

Gardening

**Greater Vancouver Taiwanese Seniors' Association**

Contact: Mr. Wu at 604-431-9039

Strathcona Chinese stroke club

**Carnegie Community Centre**

401 Main Street, Vancouver

604-665-2220

Note: seniors' programs are open to individuals aged 40+

Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner at low cost

Gymnasium

Weight room

Seniors' lounge

Seniors' bingo

Seniors' special events and trips

Coffee bar

Karaoke

Hearing clinic

Eye health clinic

Carnegie library

Yoga

Tai Chi

Music jam

AIDS support group  
Legal advice program  
Tutoring in English, computers, etc.  
First Nations studies class  
Community Development studies  
Community choir

**Ray-Cam Co-operative Centre**

920 East Hastings Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-257-6949

Computers and internet access  
Gymnasium  
Children's pre-school and day care  
Media lab  
Music jam space  
55+ Club – dance, games, coffee house  
ESL for seniors  
Mobility aids loan program  
Mini bus trips outside the community for seniors  
Foot doctor  
Karaoke and computers  
Seniors' lounge  
Tag program – Morning health checks for isolated seniors  
Seniors program committee

**Clinics**

**Vancouver Native Health Society**

449 East Hastings  
Ph. 604-254-9949

Medical clinic for Aboriginal and DTES residents and HIV+ individuals  
Dental clinic – walk in 2 days a week  
Positive outlook program – HIV+ program with a focus on First Nations  
Aboriginal diabetes awareness, prevention and teaching (ADAPT)  
Family violence program

**Pender Community Health Centre**

59 West Pender Street  
604-669-9181

Primary Health Care  
Examinations, treatment, advice and follow-up  
Immunization  
Health information

HIV+, Hepatitis A, B and C care and information  
Information on sexually transmitted infections  
Needle exchange and wound care  
Addiction services – counselling and referrals  
Mental health – therapy, rehabilitation and education  
Podiatrist (foot care)  
Respiratory therapist  
Nutritionist  
Surgery after-care at home  
Supporting frail elders at home  
Support with moves to assisted living or nursing homes  
Support for those living with or dying from advanced illness  
Adult day programs  
Community-based hospice care  
Independent living support – funds for hiring home support and attendant services  
Home care – pain management, wound care, palliative care, home IV, mobility/endurance/strength training  
Home support – personal care, end of life care, prevention of health decline  
Home hospice palliative care – care in the individual's home setting

**Downtown Community Health Centre**

569 Powell Street  
Ph. 604-255-3151

Primary health care – examinations, treatment, advice  
Immunization  
HIV+, Hepatitis testing, treatment, prevention  
Wound care  
TB testing and care  
Addictions services  
Mental health services  
Podiatrist (foot care)  
Respiratory therapist (lungs)  
Nutritionist  
Home support program  
AIDS Vancouver case worker  
Acupuncture  
Massage therapy  
Women's clinic  
On site pharmacy services

**Strathcona Mental Health Team**

330 Heatley Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-253-4401

Psychiatric assessment, rehabilitation, treatment and specialized services to individuals in the Downtown Eastside

**Insite**

Supervised injection site  
139 East Hastings Street  
Ph. 604-687-7483

Nursing care, counselling and harm reduction education

**Needle Pick-up Hotline**

Ph. 604-657-6561

Will pick up needles discovered anywhere in Vancouver

**Vancouver Crisis Centre**

Ph. 1-866-661-3311

24-hour support, information and referral line

**PRISM Alcohol and Drug Services**

Ph. 604-658-1214

Counselling and groups for substance-use-affected lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirit and queer people and for trans people – regardless of sexual orientation

**Alcohol & Drug Information and Referral Service**

Ph. 604-660-9382

Free, 24-hour information and referral line

**BC Nurse Line**

Ph. 1-866-215-4700

24-hour health-related information and referral line

**Access Central Detox Referral Line (English only)**

Ph. 1-866-658-1221

**Alcoholics Anonymous**

3457 Kingsway, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-434-3933

24-hour help and referral line

### **Narcotics Anonymous**

Ph. 1-866-683-6819 or 604-873-1018

### **Other Resources**

#### **Mission Possible**

543 Powell Street, Vancouver

Ph. 604-253-4469

Provides street-level care such as:

Nutrition, clothing, crisis counselling, referrals and spiritual support

Provides opportunity for people to engage in paid as well as unpaid work:

Work readiness course

Property maintenance course

Art studio

Recycling social enterprise

#### **Salvation Army**

##### **Harbour Light**

119 East Cordova Street, Vancouver

Ph. 604-646-6800

Emergency Shelter

Drop-in centre

Meals

Detox facility

Addictions counselling

Volunteering opportunities

Residential housing

Advocacy

#### **Downtown Eastside Women's Centre**

302 Columbia Street, Vancouver

Ph. 604-681-8480

Drop-in centre

Emergency shelter

Advocacy

Chinese seniors' outreach: translation, accompaniment to medical appointments, outreach to homes, referrals, education and information

HIV+ and harm reduction

Meals

Crime victim services

**United We Can**

39 East Hastings Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-681-0001

Recycling centre  
Commercial refuse collection  
Lane cleaning program  
Bicycle sales, service and instruction

**First United Church**

320 East Hastings Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-681-8365

Personal care facilities: showers, toiletries, emergency clothes, hair cuts  
Foot care  
Social Housing  
Personal belongings storage facility  
Social activities  
Health care nurses available  
Meals  
Emergency shelter

**Atira Women's Resource Society**

101 East Cordova Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-331-1407

Aboriginal women's outreach  
Community gardens and kitchens  
Housing outreach support worker  
Legal advocate  
Senior women's outreach: for women over 55 experiencing abuse  
Stopping the violence

**Chinese Community Policing Centre**

118 Keefer Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-688-5030

Serves the Chinese community in police-related matters  
Services in Cantonese, Mandarin and English  
Seniors safe at home program: safety presentations, safety audits  
Volunteering opportunities  
Block watch program

**MPA – Motivation, Power & Achievement**

122 Powell Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-482-3700

Supported housing for individuals living with a mental illness

**Chinese Cultural Centre**

50 East Pender Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-658-8850

English language and citizenship classes  
Chinese culture and language classes  
Museum  
Library  
Festivals  
Exhibitions  
Performances

**City Centre Care Society**

415 West Pender Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-681-9111

Cooper Place: assisted living residences for seniors  
Includes: personal care, meals, housekeeping, activities

**Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society**

1150 Raymur Avenue, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-876-3601

Community kitchens  
DTES community kitchen project  
Food depots: phone 604-876-3601

**Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC**

222 Main Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-985-5355

Legal counselling and advocacy and referral services for First Nations individuals  
Substance abuse issues  
Family and youth  
Access to justice  
Outreach  
Training  
Workshops

**Legal Services Society**

Suite 425 - 510 Burrard Street, Vancouver (Intake office)  
Ph. 604-601-6000

Legal information  
Legal advice  
Legal representation

**Access Pro Bono**

Ph. 604-878-7400 (application to attend legal clinic)

Legal clinics for free legal advice

**Pigeon Park Savings**

92 East Hastings Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-678-8276

Financial services for people living on low incomes  
Low cost banking

**Housing****The Bloom Group (formerly St. James Community Services Society)**

331 Powell Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-606-0300

Emergency shelters for women and children  
Supportive housing  
Adult guardianship program  
Hospice (end of life care) May's Place and Cottage Hospice  
Affordable housing

**Rain City Housing and Support Society**

191 Alexander Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-662-7023

Triage emergency shelter – 604-254-3700  
Supported housing  
Women's housing  
Long term housing  
Concurrent disorders outreach team

**Lookout Emergency Aid Society**  
429 Alexander Street, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-255-0340

Emergency shelters – 604-681-9126  
Drop-in centre  
Supportive and transitional housing  
Outreach programs

**SAFER (Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters)**  
Ph. 604-433-2218

Provides rental subsidies for low income seniors

**Cooperative Housing Federation of BC**  
220 – 1651 Commercial Drive, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-879-5111

Cooperative housing options with some subsidies for low-income individuals

**BC Housing**  
Suite 101 – 4555 Kingsway, Burnaby  
Ph. 604-433-2218

Housing options for seniors with low income

**Seniors Services Society**  
750 Carnarvon Street, New Westminster  
Ph. 604-520-6621

Maintains a Seniors Housing Directory for BC. Helps with referrals for adapting homes to be wheelchair friendly, meal preparation, rent subsidies for seniors, wait lists for nursing homes, personal alarms and other seniors-related housing issues.

## **Seniors**

### **411 Seniors' Centre**

333 Terminal Ave., # 704, Vancouver  
Ph. 604-684-8171

Provides information and referral services on seniors benefits (CPP, OAS, GIS, disability pension, help completing applications, referrals to legal advocates, income tax preparation, health issues and government service referrals. 411's Seniors' Outreach Services brings these services to your home.

In addition, 411 Seniors' Centre provides activities and services such as community events, workshops on topics of interest, foot care clinic, computer training, movies, a Latin American group, a mahjong group, card games, a crafts café, yoga and trips in the community.

### **Seniors' Distress Line**

Ph. 604-872-1234

For isolated seniors experiencing stress, loneliness and isolation, sadness or needing information about services in the community.

### **SeniorsBC.ca**

An informational government website including subjects such as healthy aging, health and safety, housing, home and community care, transportation and financial and legal matters.

**B: Survey**

**Community Development  
Survey**



**United Way**



United Way helping seniors  
remain independent.

Better at Home is funded by the Government of British Columbia.

Are you a... Senior  and/or a Service provider

1. What are the main issues to keep seniors living longer in their own homes?

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2. What services and programs are currently offered that help seniors live longer in their homes—  
and who provides them?

*Service*

*Provider*

<i>Service</i>	<i>Provider</i>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

b. Are they accessible? 

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3. What non-medical home support services from the Better at Home basket of services are needed?

Light housekeeping

Friendly visiting

Grocery shopping

Transportation to appointments

Simple home repairs

Snow shovelling

Light yard work

a. What non-medical home support services not listed above do you think are needed?

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4. What criteria would be important for a strong lead organization to offer Better at Home services?

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5. If you are interested in being considered for the Better at Home Advisory Committee, please  
provide your name and telephone number:

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C: Advertisement in Carnegie Newsletter



**United Way**



United Way helping seniors  
remain independent.

Better at Home is funded by the Government of British Columbia.

Help with Grocery Shopping?  
Help with House Cleaning?  
Transportation to appointments?

Have your say into what services should be  
provided to Seniors in your neighbourhood.  
We want to hear from you.

**Town Meeting**

**Where: Carnegie Community Centre Theatre**

**When: Thursday, October 24 at 2 p.m.**

“Better at Home” is a home support program designed so that Seniors  
can live independently in their homes.

Coffee and cookies will be served!

Questions? Contact Ron at [r\\_carten@hotmail.com](mailto:r_carten@hotmail.com)