



Nanaimo- Better at Home Community Development Final Report

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United Way helping seniors
remain independent.

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Acknowledgements

The information on the following pages provides a snapshot of the passion and commitment that we discovered within Nanaimo for seniors. It is with deep gratitude that we thank the seniors, family members and service providers who shared their perspectives with honesty.

The United Way continues to be leaders in funding innovative processes and setting a new standard in what we hope will be a new method of funding allocation. Adding an authentic community development approach in the selection and distribution of Better at Home Program funds creates a systemic method of ensuring that program participants play an active role in program development and implementation.

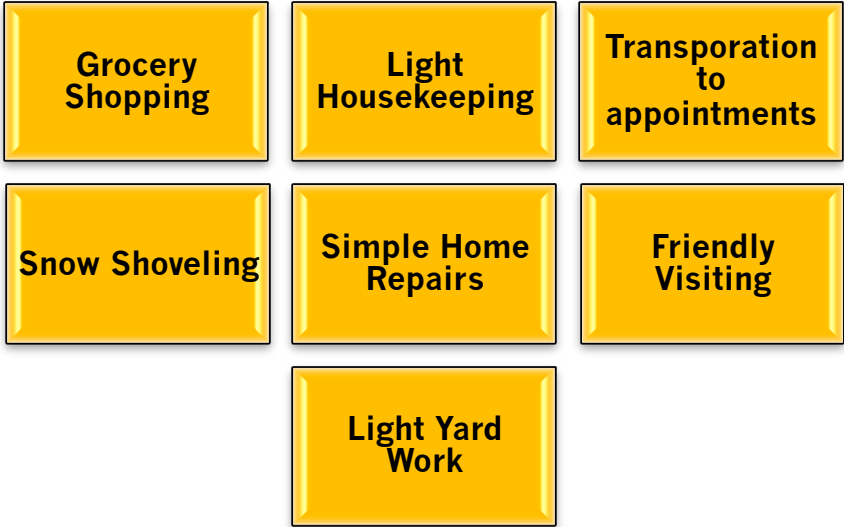
We would like to honour the four organizations who enthusiastically stepped up to the plate to be potential lead agencies with genuine commitment and passion to serve seniors in the community. The level of honesty, respect and courage during this process was truly admirable. Nanaimo should be proud to have a network of dedicated organizations from which to build and support the Better at Home Program.

Thank you to the United Way Central and Northern Vancouver Island as well as the Provincial support team at the United Way of the Lower Mainland.

Tracy Smyth & Julie Rushton

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:



Nanaimo has been identified as a potential Better at Home site. Tracy Smyth and Julie Rushton were contracted as community developers 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 developers and will be used by the lead organization to design an appropriate local Better at Home program that meets community needs.

Local Community Development Approach & Findings

Community development is a dynamic process to discover and mobilize local assets towards building a community that supports its local residents. In Nanaimo, the community developers were external from the community and took an approach as learners, seeking out and hearing the story of the area in order to identify the local assets that would support a successful implementation of the Better at Home Program. The fusion of facts and stories set the stage for consensus-based decisions about the lead agency for the program and how the program might look unique for Nanaimo residents. The community development activities included:

- Documentary analysis of reports, project materials and information provided by stakeholder groups;
 - Best of Care Report: Getting it Right For Seniors in British Columbia by the Office of the Ombudsperson, 2012
 - Local Health Area Profile for Nanaimo prepared by Vancouver Island Health Authority, July 2012
 - Making Meaningful Connections: A Profile of Social Isolation Among Older Adults in Small Town & Small City, British Columbia, 2006
 - Official Community Plan of Nanaimo, 2012
 - Removing Barriers to Social Isolation Report, City of Nanaimo, 2013
 - Statistics Canada, Census Reports
 - United Way of the Lower Mainland Seniors Vulnerability Report, 2011
- 27 interviews with seniors and service providers across the community. The list of interviewees emerged based on recommendations by local stakeholders as well as a targeted approach to include a range of voices and perspectives
- Two focus groups, both with local service providers each with approximately 10-12 individuals
- A total of 28 written surveys: 13 from seniors and 15 from local service providers
- A Community Forum with a total attendance of 25 people, including both seniors and service providers
- A stakeholder's meeting to confirm the lead agency and program partners that had 16 attendees
- Data collection from two outlying communities in response to the call for service from the unique communities of Gabriola Island and Ladysmith.

In total, the process linked approximately 23 community agencies to the Better at Home process.

Community Profile

Description of the local seniors' population

The Coast Salish people once thrived in the Nanaimo area with evidence of their villages dating back over 3,000 years. It was coal that brought settlers: the Hudson Bay Company in 1852 and settlers from both Europe and China earning Nanaimo the nickname “Black Diamond City” for the growing coal mining industry. Eventually the forestry industry became the primary economic driver in the early 1960's.

According to the last census in 2011, the population of Nanaimo was 83,810, 24% of which are seniors over the age of 65. The population is expected to grow by 32% by 2030 and the population 75 years and older is expected to grow by 87% during this time. That would translate into a growth from approximately 9,000 seniors in 2011 to 16,800 seniors in 2030.

In general, future population growth is expected to be caused by people moving to Nanaimo rather than a natural increase. Also, as stated in Nanaimo's Official Community Plan, “the aging of the city's population will be a dominant theme with the 65 plus age groups experiencing the greatest increase” (City of Nanaimo, 2012)

Tables 1 and 2 offer demographic data by age and by census neighbourhood within Nanaimo. Of particular note are the shaded areas that denote the locations of the highest population of seniors and where the highest proportion of low-income seniors.

Table 1 – Population and Age Demographics in Nanaimo

	Total Population	Men	Women
Total	20,065	9,540	10,535
65-69 years	6,150	2,905	3,250
70-74 years	4,710	2,305	2,400
75-79 years	3,610	1,740	1,870
80-84 years	3,055	1,455	1,605
85 years and older	2,540	1,135	1,410

Statistics Canada, 2011; VIHA Local Health Area Profile, 2012

Table 2 – Distribution of seniors in Nanaimo census Neighbourhoods

Nanaimo Census Neighbourhood	Total Population	Population of Seniors 65 years +	Population of Low Income Seniors 65 years +
Chase River/Duke Point/South End	5,735	803	700
City Centre/Protection Island	4,335	954	793
Departure Bay	5,305	1,008	382
Divers Lake	6,020	1,144	307
Dover	6,610	1,388	291
Hammond Bay	2,570	720	0
Harewood	5,570	613	1,393
Linley Valley	2,995	509	0
Long Lake	6,045	1,149	641
Newcastle	3,185	860	478
North Slope	4,955	842	198
Northfield	4,630	602	352
Old City/VIU	6,305	1,198	977
Pleasant Valley	8,115	2,272	625
Townsite	4,840	920	886
Westwood	3,845	577	281
Total	81,060	15,557	8,302

Statistics Canada, 2006; Removing Barriers to Social Isolation, City of Nanaimo, 2013

It should be noted that Statistics Canada data does not provide a good reflection of information about the local First Nation populations. Nanaimo is located in Coast Salish territory and is home to the Snuneymuxw First Nation which is one of the largest First Nations by population in the province hosting over 1,700 people.

Summary of Community Assets

“Community assets include both stakeholders (a person, group, and organizations with investments in senior’s health and wellbeing) and services (non-medical and medical support services) and programs available for seniors that help them live longer in their own homes and remain engaged in the community.”

*Better at Home,
United Way of the Lower Mainland*

What services are currently **working well** to support seniors living independently? In the process of answering this question, a strong theme emerged from the community development process about the need for improved integration among current community assets. For the most part, respondents shared assets with the caveat that Nanaimo needed a single point of contact to ease accessibility barriers for seniors. Terms such as “hub” and “referral agency” were used repeatedly.

Table 2 (below) is a compilation of the services and organizations that were specifically noted as helpful in supporting seniors to live independently. Supports and services marked with an asterisk (*) may require some additional explanation as follows:

- * **Red Cross Health Equipment Loan Cupboard**
This national program provides health equipment to individuals dealing with illness or injury. This is a volunteer-supported, community-based service working in partnership with the local health authority.
- * **PATS: Personal Assistance to Seniors**
This fee for service organization is a Nanaimo-based company of trades and professionals dedicated to assisting seniors. Their services align with the Better at Home basket of services and include home repairs, friendly visiting, house cleaning and yard work.
- * **RRAP: Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program**
This Government of Canada program offers financial assistance to low-income homeowners for mandatory home repairs that will preserve the quality of affordable housing.

Table 2 – Community Assets

Hoarding Task Force	*Red Cross Loan Cupboard	*P.A.T.S.	Private Providers	*RRAP home reno program
Grocery Stores that deliver	Hospice	*VIHA Home & Community Care	*Medication Dispenser – Hospital Foundation	*Mid Island Abilities and Ind. Living
Life Line	Rotary Club	Citizens Advocacy	Handi-dart	Tillicum Lelum
Wheels for Wellness	Kidney Foundation	*Nanaimo Seniors Services Network	Multicultural Society	Bowen Park Seniors
*Volunteer Nanaimo	Harbour City Seniors	Legions	*Nanaimo Family Life	Senior Peer Counselling (NFL)
Intensive Integrated Care Management	Meals on Wheels	Seniors Outreach Team – VIHA	Families	*George Pearkes Senior Housing

- * **Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) Home and Community Care**
Health care and personal support services provided to eligible people served by VIHA. These services may be provided on a short or long term basis and may change as client needs change. Eligibility is based on assessment.
- * **Medication Dispenser Systems – Hospital Foundation/Lifeline**
This service is available to assist people with medication compliance. The device (with a monthly fee) helps to manage complex medication schedules.
- * **Mid Island Abilities and Independent Living**
This not for profit service offers companionship on a regular basis such as telephone calls and visits from volunteers, as well as opportunities to get out and enjoy being part of the community.

* **Volunteer Nanaimo**

Volunteer Nanaimo is a multi-service volunteer center. They connect non-profit and community based organizations, individuals and volunteer opportunities.

* **Nanaimo Seniors Service Network**

This is a group of businesses, not for profit organizations and individuals who are concerned with the welfare of seniors in Nanaimo. The group meets monthly.

* **Nanaimo Family Life**

This non for profit organization provides a variety of services and training including education on elder abuse and senior peer counselling.

* **General George R. Pearkes Senior Citizens Housing Society**

This non-profit society provides affordable housing options for low-income seniors.



Factors of Vulnerability

The analysis of interview, focus group and community forum feedback suggests two significant themes of vulnerability for seniors in Nanaimo –economic insecurity and social isolation, both of which are validated by both provincial and national research on aging (Cloutier-Fisher et. al.; 2006; United Way, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2006).

Economic Insecurity

The concern for economic insecurity reaches to seniors who do not have available money to pay for healthy food, safe housing, services, and medical costs as well as to engage in recreational activity. These individuals may or may not be living in “poverty” depending on other financial assets. (United Way, 2011)

Interviews with service providers in Nanaimo consistently highlighted experiences that saw those living with a fixed income face significant barriers to accessing non-medical supports such as those in the Better at Home basket of services.

Social Isolation

There are many factors that contribute to social isolation among seniors including physical environment, distance from family and friends, problems negotiating transportation and living alone (Cloutier_Fisher et. al., 2006)

People participating in the Nanaimo Better at Home community development process consistently referred to isolation, loneliness, being cut off after a spouse has passed away and being shut in as the most significantly vulnerable situation for seniors in the area. They described this problem as being compounded when seniors, who are frequently reluctant to ask for help, find navigating Nanaimo services difficult.

In 2013, the City of Nanaimo commissioned a study to identify, understand, and propose the removal of barriers to social integration facing newly arrived seniors who may not have strong connections to the community outside of their immediate families. The findings, part of a municipal age friendly initiative found that:

- Declining physical mobility and deteriorating sight and hearing were identified as a concern from senior’s independence and a significant barrier to participating in community life including accessing information.
- Service providers play a crucial outreach role in maintaining and supporting social interaction among isolated seniors
- Seniors can be reluctant to ask for help

- Mobility and transportation issues (including costs) are creating barriers to social interaction
- Loss of partner or friends with an inability or reluctance to connect with new social networks leads to increased isolation
- TV or word of mouth are important information modes for isolated seniors

Building on both the City of Nanaimo's Social Isolation report and the findings of the Better at Home Community Development process is important to influence the design of how the Nanaimo Better at Home program will be offered to local seniors.

The following are two local stories that provide a lens of lived experience to the factors of vulnerability.

One of the lovely seniors we met was still very active within her home, canning, baking bread and doing her own light housekeeping. She shared that she often got so lonely sitting and looking at her clean apartment. This senior has a large family and they all try to support their Mothers needs. That being said, their Mothers quality of life is dependent on them carving time from their work and family demands to take her out to socialize, have her hair done or grocery shop. This senior felt guilty asking her family to help.

"Our father lives in Nanaimo and we do not. We found it very difficult to locate services and often felt like we were playing 'connect the dots' with one service provider sometimes leading to another. If there had been a local agency that acted as a hub for senior's services we would have been able to provide Dad with the support he required much sooner than we did."

Senior's needs related to non-medical home support services

"Better at Home is designed to assist seniors with simple day-to-day tasks, thereby helping seniors maintain their independence and stay connected with their community... Better at Home is designed to be adaptable to the characteristics of a community and will address specific needs of local seniors. Services will be chosen from the basket of services."

*Better at Home,
United Way of the Lower Mainland*

What **non-medical** home supports from the Better at Home basket of services are needed in this community?

This was a consistent question asked across interviews, surveys, focus groups and at the community forum. The responses sparked conversation that connected each basket of services with specific local need. Figure 1 shows a rough representation of the priority given to each basket of service. The large font represents the service area that more people indicated was needed in the community. The smallest fonts suggest that these services are less in demand.

Figure 1



More specifically, under these broad categories, seniors and senior serving organizations described the following services which, currently, local needs are not well met:

1. Transportation to appointments
 - Fill gaps due to limitations of HandyDART service
 - Not just to appointments – also to social outings, for errands and to opportunities for physical activity
2. Friendly visiting
 - Visiting, social, in-person check-ins
 - A place to gather – currently many senior groups exist only if something is “wrong”
 - Help seniors find a social network
 - A break for primary caregiver if they are looking after a spouse
 - Build relationship between volunteer and senior
 - Ability for volunteers to observe living conditions on a friendly visit
 - Walking companion
3. Light Housekeeping
 - Connected with friendly visit
 - Laundry
 - Clutter control
4. Grocery Shopping
 - Help with task of grocery shopping e.g. reading labels and putting away groceries
 - Overcome barrier of online grocery shopping
5. Simple Home Repairs
 - Building ramps
6. Light Yard Work
 - Providing tools as well as labour
 - Chopping wood
7. Snow Removal

Other needs identified that may land outside the scope of the Better at Home program include;

- Advocacy within the system of senior's services
- End of Life planning
- Financial planning
- Haircuts
- Health Education opportunities such as cooking skills (or connection to ones that currently exist)
- Major house cleaning tasks
- Meal planning and meal prep
- Pet care (walking, cleaning, vet visits)

Suggested Opportunities for service integration/coordination

Both seniors and service providers shared stories that the services in Nanaimo can be difficult to navigate. There was a consistent call for a referral agency or hub to help streamline the access to services for seniors.

This sentiment is echoed in the recommendation of the recent report by the City of Nanaimo to reduce social barriers for seniors. They are as follows:

- Continue and strengthen cooperation and collaboration among service providers, community organizations, seniors and other stakeholders.
- Assist in the establishment of a one-stop shop that provides seniors, especially those who are vulnerable to the risks of isolation, with easily accessible, user friendly and understandable information. The suggestion here was to assist in the development of coordinated community and information and sharing across community agencies.
- Improve or increase opportunities for isolated seniors to participate in community life. Specifically, seamless services provide greater continuity for seniors are possible through enhanced collaborations between organizations.

Community Readiness

Explanation of community readiness that reflects community consultations and meetings

Information obtained through the Community Development process demonstrated that Nanaimo is well positioned to begin delivery of the Better at Home basket of services.

Potential risks going forward

Risks were identified related to senior and volunteer safety. Issues and strategies include:

1. Quality volunteer training and support was considered a primary focus and an integral part of program development.
2. Many volunteers are senior's themselves. It was shared that these volunteers are overtaxed in some areas and can result in poor self-care. Ongoing volunteer management and support is critical.
3. A focus on trustworthy referrals communicated to seniors to reduce fear of engagement was described as a strategy for this risk.
4. An acknowledgment that the increasing demographic projections and the fact that Nanaimo faces a large proportion of low-income seniors will deplete funding available for service subsidies.
5. The seniors who could be served by a Nanaimo Better at Home program cover a large geography. As noted in a future section, seniors on Gabriola Island and in the Town of Ladysmith have significant needs that require special care and attention by both the Nanaimo lead agency as well as United Way of the Lower Mainland.



Local Better at Home Program Details

Preferred Services and Preferred Service Approach

In summary, transportation and friendly visiting surface as the top two priorities from the Better at Home basket of services that most meet the support gaps currently faced by seniors in Nanaimo. Group discussion at the Community Forum supported the concept that some of the other services (light housekeeping and grocery shopping) can be combined with a friendly visit. The other related function that emerged as critical to the success of this program was that the agency delivering the Better at Home services provide leadership to help connect local senior-serving organizations and increase collaboration.

Key Qualities for Lead Agency Selection (agreed upon at community forum)

- High Profile, respected, trusted, connected
- Sensitive & non-judgemental re: volunteer and senior matches
- Organizational capacity to take this on
- Volunteer infrastructure, management and training ability
- Knowledgeable of other support services – a HUB
- Committed to start program...and not stop
- Established relationship with the United Way

Selection Process

At the time of the scheduled Community Forum, four organizations came forward with an expression of interest in pursuing the role of lead agency for the Better at Home Program; Canadian Red Cross, Volunteer Nanaimo, Mid-Island Abilities and Independent Living Society and Nanaimo Family Life.

The decision-making occurred following the Community Forum at the Stakeholders meeting. The selection utilized a process of matching community-determined needs, co-created lead agency criteria, with organizations' interest and capacity. The stakeholder group agreed that all criteria was equally important in the decision making process.

Criteria created by stakeholders:

1. Already established evidenced by longevity, # of seniors served, volunteer base and growth
2. Connections with community, with seniors and with other service organizations
3. Evidence of using best practices and following health care trends
4. Ability to advocate and provide system navigation
5. Marketing and outreach capability
6. A vision and capacity to move forward in January
7. Established relationships with Multicultural Society and Aboriginal organizations
8. Already providing some of the services from the Better at Home basket of services
9. Quality volunteer training, management and ongoing support
10. Infrastructure already in place to handle program demands re: finances, administration and policies
11. Established relationship with the United Way

Figure 1 – Visual of matching criteria and strengths of potential lead agencies



Proposed Lead Agency

Nanaimo Family Life has been chosen by their peers to deliver the Better at Home program in Nanaimo.

Nanaimo Family Life Association is a non-profit organization providing holistic personal and professional growth programs founded on the passionate belief that: **Healthy individuals and family relationships are the heart of a strong and resilient community.**

Mission

To provide support to families to achieve their full potential through all stages of life;

To promote healthy family life as the heart of a strong and resilient community;

To protect and promote the rights of children, parents, caregivers and families;

To model diversity, inclusion, respect, cooperation, compassion, and peace in all our activities and relationships.

The programs offered through Nanaimo Family Life are diverse and include volunteer counselling, senior peer counselling, elder abuse prevention, men's groups, psycho-educational workshops and professional development.

During the Community Forum, participants were asked to give "advice" to the lead agency. People wrote their thoughts on slips of paper and handed them in anonymously. The following is a selection that represents the general sentiments of the group.

"Don't forget your purpose – keep seniors in their homes."

"Please consider the ethnic groups and their needs."

"Is your volunteer training adequate? How do you know?"

"Lead agency to make themselves loud and noticeable in the community."

"Be sure to stay connected to the consumer."

Gabriola Island & Ladysmith

During the Nanaimo Community Development process, questions emerged from service providers about how the outlying (but connected) communities of Ladysmith and Gabriola Island could be served. Both these communities offer a unique situation that would not be served well as an “add-on” geography for the Nanaimo lead agency.

Ladysmith

The local health area of Ladysmith includes both the Town of Ladysmith and the municipality of North Cowichan (including Chemainus, Crofton and Maple Bay). The Town of Ladysmith is located to the south of the Nanaimo Regional District and with over 2,075 residents. It is becoming a renowned retirement community with 24.3% growth in the last ten years being driven by new residents many of whom are senior citizens. In the last decade, the population of people over the age of 55 has grown by 70%. Currently, the median age of Ladysmith has increased from 37.5 in 1996 to 48.3 in 2011. It has a higher median age than most other communities in BC.

The Ladysmith Resource Centre Association has been the main provider of non-medical services to seniors for over 20 years. They produce an annual Ladysmith Seniors Directory that highlights resources in the Ladysmith area. From the Resource Center alone, many of the Better at Home basket of services are offered. These include; friendly visiting, a phoning tree, a shopping program, out of town medical transportation, social activities and volunteer opportunities for seniors to help at early years programs.

Better at Home surveys submitted during the Community Development process for Nanaimo highlighted local assets from the Ladysmith Resource Centre as well as recreational services from The Town of Ladysmith Parks, Recreation and Culture, service clubs, the adult day program, home care, and the monthly seniors page in local newspaper. Surveys also indicated that there are still significant gaps for local seniors in including local transportation, home maintenance, home repairs, house cleaning.

To validate the Better at Home survey findings for the area, Ladysmith residents shared the results of a recent lifestyle questionnaire that was completed in 2013 by 58 seniors. The summary of this questionnaire suggests that the top two issues are access to health care and public transportation. These findings emphasize that local seniors are having difficulty getting to local medical appointments.

Through conversations with local organizations, it became clear that this community has a well-established and collaborative infrastructure that would be capable of offering a Better at Home

program to augment and strengthen the current supports already in place. It is a community whose demographic projections suggest a need and whose history of not being well served by nearby larger centres is well known.

Gabriola Island

Gabriola is a small island off the coast of Nanaimo accessible a 20-minute ferry ride. Similar to Ladysmith, this community is poorly served by Nanaimo based organizations and have found the internal capacity to develop local, grass-roots supports. The residents of Gabriola Island shared their commitment and passion for responsive senior care during the Nanaimo Community Development Process. People for a Health Community (PHC) submitted a report that speaks for itself in terms of local need and local capacity. The information is best honoured by providing an excerpt here.

Gabriola is a small rural community with the same diversity and range of challenges and needs as a big city, just reduced in scale. Yet our access to services is far more limited.

A 2009 affordable housing feasibility study commissioned by the Local Trust Committee of the Islands Trust demonstrated that Gabriola has undergone many changes in the last few years, with our population increasing by 15% during the last census period coupled with a steep climb in housing prices since 2001. Some of the key challenges for Gabriola as identified in the study are housing security, affordability, supported living for seniors, substandard housing, and homelessness.

According to 2011 census figures, the population of Gabriola has a median age of 57.3 which places this community of 5000 in with some of the oldest in the country. Seniors in our community wish to stay on the island—many have grown up or raised families here—yet find they haven't been able to access the kinds of support that would allow them to remain living independently in their homes. Many are forced to move off-island into care far earlier than they would have in an urban setting. There is no assisted living facility on the island, no adult daycare or respite care, and no public transportation or handy-dart service (although there is a public bus pilot project underway). Travelling to Nanaimo for hospitalization, outpatient treatment and specialist appointments are extremely taxing on seniors, particularly on our fragile elders.

People for a Healthy Community (PHC) is a non-profit social service agency and community resource centre. PHC was established in 1996 to address poverty and isolation issues and to support those in crisis on Gabriola. PHC's vision is that the contribution and input from all Gabriola residents is necessary to fulfill our aim of an inclusive and strong community that is responsive, caring and sustainable. By building local capacity and connections we strengthen the social networks that make Gabriola a safe and healthy place to live.

The Seniors Circle of Care Program emerged as a community response to the growing seniors

population and the lack of or cut-backs to supports and services for seniors.

In April 2011, PHC sponsored the first of three community consultations with seniors and potential volunteers. Our goal was to determine the needs and desires of local seniors and to expand our Circle of Care program to include seniors and their caregivers. Notes and survey results from the first session were used to develop a more detailed questionnaire that was distributed at second and third sessions in May and June. The results highlighted common key issues for Gabriola's seniors: isolation, transportation, affordable assisted living, caregiver respite, and yard & house work.

PHC's Seniors Circle of Care could be viewed as a mini Better at Home Program. We are proud of what we have accomplished with limited resources, however we have only been able to scratch the surface of the need on Gabriola. We have been working on a shoestring budget and need help to expand this into an effective and sustainable community program.

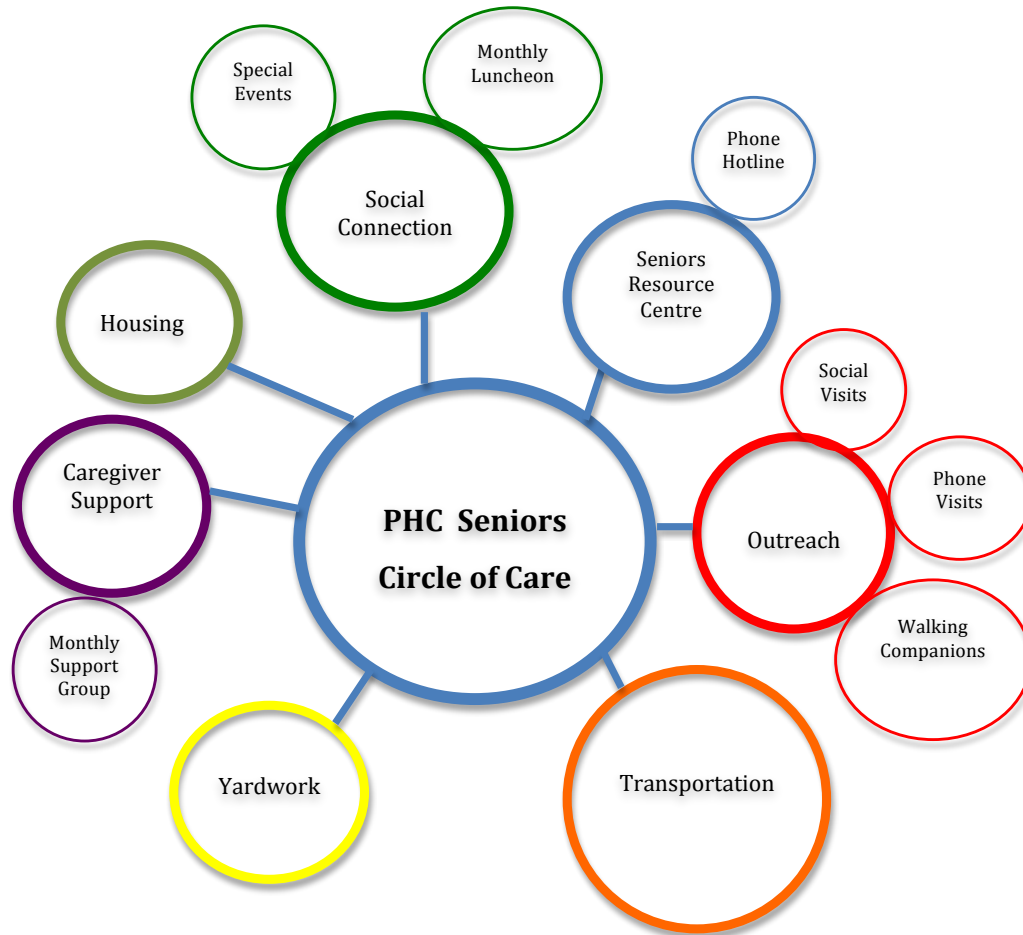
We intend to undertake a seniors asset-mapping project this year. Our hope is to identify more of the gifts, resources and wisdom that local seniors have to offer, as well as the resources and assets of the community at large, as they relate to seniors. This will allow the Seniors Circle of Care to draw on a larger volunteer base and to match islanders (many of them seniors) who can offer support or mentoring with seniors or other islanders in need (for example, seniors mentoring youth or offering workshops). We hope to draw on the information gathered from the mapping project to draw in volunteers and create programming based on available local knowledge and resources. This will go a long way in making the Circle of Care sustainable.

We have limited funds through United Way and Vancouver Foundation for the mapping project. Additional support from the Better at Homes program—necessary funds as well as expertise (materials and planning tools for how to set up a Better at Homes program)—would be helpful in ensuring that our program is as valuable to the community as possible. We created the Circle of Care program on our own; we would love to expand and augment our programs.

Gabriola Island, as indicative from their report, have a plan to strengthen their current supports to local seniors. Home and Community Care provide medical supports to seniors on Gabriola Island, so aligning PHC's work with the Better at Home program as it is developed in nearby Nanaimo means improved integration and coordination that makes sense with the larger Nanaimo area in a way that is locally responsive.



PHC Circle of Care Program Seniors Circle



Gabrielans Helping Gabrielans: The Seniors Circle of Care Program provides social connection, transportation support, a monthly lunch social, care-giving support, knowledge of local resources, help with yardwork, research into affordable and stable housing, and an information hotline at the **PHC Community Resource Centre**. The outreach program offers friendly visits and phone calls, walks, advocacy and help with local trips. For more information, contact resources@phcgabriola.org or call 325-2273.

Recommendations for Next Steps

1. Nanaimo Family Life Association to submit funding application to United Way.
2. United Way Central and Northern Vancouver Island and United Way of the Lower Mainland to work together to find a solution to offer seniors on Gabriola Island and in Ladysmith with locally coordinated Better at Home services.
3. Integrate the following advice given by community forum participants to build an effective program implementation plan;
 - a. Emphasize confidentiality and non-judgemental approaches with volunteers.
 - b. Actively engage with multicultural society and aboriginal organizations.
 - c. Ensure other senior serving organizations participate in advisory committee along with seniors. Utilize one another's strengths to build a greater bridge to those seniors and families that require Better at Home Support.
4. Engage individuals (both service providers and seniors) who indicated a willingness to act in an advisory capacity to the Better at Home Program (contact information provided to lead agency).

Appendix A

Consultation Summary

Met or consulted with representatives from the following agencies, organizations and businesses:

- Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Central Vancouver Island
- Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society
- City of Nanaimo – City Planning
- Crisis Response Network
- Dance and music therapist for seniors
- Inter Tribal Health Authority, Community Engagement Hub
- Job Talk Radio - BC
- John Howard Society
- Kidney Foundation
- Ladysmith Resource Centre
- Life Line
- Mid Island Abilities and Independent Living
- Nanaimo Citizen Advocacy Association
- Nanaimo Community Kitchens Society
- Nanaimo Family Life
- Nanaimo Seniors Network
- Nurse Next Door
- Old Age Pensioners Society
- People for a Healthy Community, Gabriola
- Red Cross
- Seniors Transportation Access and Resources
- VIHA - Volunteer Services
- VIHA - Home and continuing care
- VIHA – Seniors Outreach Team
- Volunteer Nanaimo

Received 28 paper surveys

- 15 from service providers
- 13 from seniors

Completed 11 one-on-one interviews with seniors.

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