

Sustaining Seniors Programs *through the* Neighbourhood House Model



A Project Of

- City of Vancouver
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
- Kiwassa Neighbourhood House and
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House

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Seniors are parents, grandparents, caregivers, neighbours, friends, customers, teachers and more. They are of every ethnicity, language, socio-economic group, sexual orientation, belief system and political persuasion. They range widely in age, health status and levels of ability. They carry rich stories of personal, family and community experience.

Seniors engage in their communities, participate, and receive support in many different ways. They partake of programs at community recreation centres, and may be part of boards or planning committees. They manage and attend non-profit seniors' centres; they participate in religious and cultural associations; and they volunteer. Other seniors are much more isolated and not connected.

In Vancouver, Neighbourhood Houses are an important resource for seniors. The Neighbourhood House is a place where seniors gather, identify needs, seek solutions, make friends, get support, increase their well being, take leadership, and play an active role in their communities.

Three Neighbourhood Houses, each with a substantial history of working with seniors, believe the Neighbourhood Houses have a unique model for working with and supporting seniors, and improving the quality of life in our communities.

The purpose of this review is to discuss the unique approach that neighbourhood houses use in working with their neighbourhoods, and in particular, with seniors, and to describe a neighbourhood house model for seniors work.

This report includes:

- *The Neighbourhood House vision / mission;*
- *The strengths of the Neighbourhood House model;*
- *A description of the full continuum of seniors programs and opportunities that neighbourhood houses can support; and*
- *A discussion of the features that assist the sustainability of this model.*

This review is based on an analysis of the history, functioning and activities of three Vancouver Neighbourhood Houses: Kitsilano Neighbourhood House; Kiwassa Neighbourhood House; and South Vancouver Neighbourhood House.

As noted in the proposal to the Union of BC Municipalities, the review was intended both to provide an opportunity for the three involved houses to examine and increase the effectiveness of their practices, and to provide information about the Neighbourhood House approach that could be useful to seniors groups and to other non-profit groups working with and for seniors, throughout the Province. With funding from United Way of the Lower Mainland, three seniors projects were resourced and serve as case studies, illustrating the NH approach in action.

The planned objectives of this project and project methodology are outlined in Appendix 1. In brief, there were many meetings with the Executive Directors, with staff, seniors and others; compilation of programs for each house, surveys of involved seniors, and much dialogue and information sharing.

The Neighbourhood Houses wish to acknowledge their many community partners, as well as the funders of this project and seniors programs. We also acknowledge the seniors and volunteers active in neighbourhood houses, who generously share their skills, leadership, experience and energy.



The Neighbourhood House (NH) model is a dynamic, unique and sustainable approach to engaging and empowering people in their neighbourhoods, building connections and relationships between different parts of society (including individuals, groups, organizations, businesses, and government agencies), developing effective programs, and building healthy, inclusive communities.

Each NH has its own flavour and programs based on its geographic area and population demographics; however, there are basic similarities that NHs share, and common approaches:

- *Grassroots community building approach, addressing local concerns;*
- *Based within neighbourhoods and open and inclusive of all, multigenerational;*
- *Welcoming neighbourhood facilities the community feels ownership of;*
- *Strengths and assets are engaged for communal benefits; and*
- *Strong partnerships with other groups and organizations.*

This combination of NH characteristics, along with strengths that other non-profits share (such as: professional and caring staff, committed boards, infrastructure and management systems, delivery of relevant and effective programs and services) together make up the NH model and allow NHs to play a unique and important role in their communities.

The NH model has proven to be sustainable, due to the commitment of communities, NHs and partners to neighbourhood-based work. Dating back to 1884, the NH model and approach is embedded in its history as part of the settlement house movement. The settlement' mission is itself rooted in the humanistic and communitarian philosophy aimed to equalize society while improving the day to day life of the poor. This remains consistent with NH missions today.

For more information on the three Neighbourhood Houses participating in the study, and the history of neighbourhood houses, see Appendix 2.

Quilts and Teddy Bears

At Kiwassa, a project to knit teddy bears, and make small quilts for disadvantaged children in other parts of the world has involved dozens of seniors working many thousands of hours. Over 2,300 teddy bears and 1,400 quilts have been sent to

children's orphanages, hospitals and schools around the world, with support from the Rotary Club. Kitsilano seniors heard about the project and with support from the Kiwassa program, also produced 75 teddy bears to add to the shipments.



Grassroots Community Building Approach, Addressing Local Concerns

Neighbourhood Houses are grassroots non-profit organizations, based in geographic neighbourhoods, that use community engagement and capacity building approaches to identify and respond to community needs.

While the NH provides many important services and programs, the model is not primarily about the services; it is about community engagement and community building. Neighbours come together to share their experiences, concerns and ideas, and together with the NH and the resources it can mobilize, develop community-based programs to address those issues and ideas. This is the way many of the NH programs and services began.

Neighbourhood Houses use democratic values and approaches. The term “client” is not used; people involved in programs are neighbours, friendly acquaintances, program participants, volunteers. When visiting a seniors program at a NH, it is often difficult to identify which people are staff, which people are participants and which people are volunteers; the approach is of doing with, not services for. Most often volunteers are neighbours who became involved in existing programs and activities at the NH, and then start to assist in program delivery (such as making the soup for lunch, or organizing the wool in the crafts cupboard or befriending the new senior who joins), or who share new ideas and help start new programs.

Neighbourhood Houses are intentional in seeking new ideas from people in the neighbourhood, and facilitating development of new activities and opportunities. For example, each NH has a senior’s advisory committee or senior’s council, and invites seniors and others in the community to share their concerns and ideas. Engagement takes place through committee or council meetings; informal conversations, participant feedback on programs; many networking and outreach events; keeping up with current community information; and by having a reputation for being an interested resource to the community, which residents and groups can turn to.



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Based Within Neighbourhoods, Open and Inclusive of All: Multigenerational...

Neighbourhood Houses are welcoming gathering places for everyone in the community. Taking an holistic approach, the NH seeks to involve the whole neighbourhood and reflect the diversity within it. The NH is for everyone – rich, poor, newcomer, all ages, cultures, perspectives and personalities. Staff and volunteers are intentionally recruited to reflect that diversity. In a NH, staff includes immigrants and Aboriginal people, collectively speak many languages, and often started as volunteers.

Many non-profits engage different ages / populations and some do it in specific geographic areas. The difference in the NH model is that it works with everyone, from all walks of life, within a geographic neighbourhood, developing collaborative networks with other organizations and groups, and for the purpose of building healthy, inclusive neighbourhoods. The NH provides spaces, services and opportunities for these purposes.

Neighbourhood Houses develop programs that reflect the needs and interests of those living in the neighbourhood. While programs vary to reflect unique neighbourhood priorities, all have a range of programs tailored for different age groups, multi-age activities, multicultural activities and opportunities. NH programs are designed to include all. Therefore programs are, as much as possible, free or low cost. Food is often included in activities, and transportation is provided when needed and possible. NH programs are delivered in their primary location and off-site places such as housing co-op common rooms or church basements within the neighbourhood, in order to be closer to where people live or gather.

Neighbourhood House programs usually include most of the following: licensed childcare; community celebrations and food programs; employment support and job training; youth recreation, education and leadership development; community art projects; community gardens; family support and resource programs; non-profit housing; information, referral and counseling; ESL classes and settlement and integration activities; out of school activities for children 6 – 12 years; seniors health, wellness and education activities; volunteer training and community involvement opportunities; and informal activities and initiatives.

One of the benefits of the NH as a diverse, multigenerational and multiservice hub is that there are many opportunities or “points of entry” into the NH. For example, a senior might bring a grandchild to and from day care or afterschool programs, first participate through a community celebration or open house, be a volunteer cook within the morning breakfast program or be recruited to the NH board of directors through connections with the local library or businesses.

The inclusive approach and capacity building philosophy of NHs shapes the way staff think and approach program development.

Brain Gym

Kitsilano Neighbourhood House had an opportunity to offer a “brain gym” program for seniors. As the staff described it, they considered the cost of the program, whether seniors could afford it, whether some seniors could be subsidized to participate, and how seniors could be trained in the program and then encouraged / expected to share the program with others who had not been able to participate. In other words, there is an almost automatic approach to look for ways to include all and to maximize opportunities through capacity building and sharing.



Welcoming, Well-Designed Facilities “Owned” by the Community

Often described as “the living room of the community”, Neighbourhood House spaces are intentionally designed to be welcoming and comfortable spaces. The door to the NH is open, and people enter and leave at will, as if it is their own house. People greet each other with smiles and hellos. There is no need to check in with a receptionist, and all are welcome to use the communal space.

Couches, chairs and tables are situated in the lobby, there are multiple well equipped activity spaces for friendly gatherings, and the décor is bright, often displaying the artwork of local participants and neighbours. Bulletin boards are filled with information about NH programs and activities, as well as information about what is going on elsewhere in the community. Most importantly, the coffee pot is always full, and programs and groups can use the communal kitchen, computers, activity rooms, and vans for outings. Food is most often prepared on-site, and is an important part of many programs and activities, further contributing to the warm and social atmosphere.

What do people see when they visit a NH? There is a vibrant mix of people of all walks of life and at all stages of the life cycle, interacting in a casual, friendly environment. Seniors of different cultural backgrounds might be gathering together for a field trip, while parents with babies and toddlers make their way to the Family Place, and youth come in to attend classes or talk with youth workers. Adults stop by to use the phone, the free public access computers, or to search the job postings and bulletin boards.

Support Groups

East African Elders Support Group at South Vancouver NH:

An adult grandchild approached South Vancouver NH, concerned about her grandmother and the isolation she was experiencing since arriving in Canada. Through discussion with NH staff, it was decided to try a mutual support group for East African elders, which the grandchild would co-facilitate. South Vancouver NH was able to provide space for the group, and the structure of an advertised, organized weekly group. Together, this group was developed and successfully launched. Elders meet to share stories and snacks, making connections and reducing isolation.

Chinese Grandparents Support Group at South Vancouver NH:

A group of Chinese grandparents were observed hanging around the neighbourhood near schools waiting for their grandchildren to finish school. The NH staff opened a discussion with the grandparents and discovered they needed a place to meet and share ideas about caring for grandchildren. A grandparent's drop-in group was created, meeting weekly on Saturday mornings at the neighbourhood house. Grandparents are learning new skills for caring for their grandchildren and are far less isolated, now they have found a place to go that welcomes them and addresses their unique needs as caregivers.

Strengths and Assets Engaged for Communal Benefit

Yoga

The yoga class at Kitsilano NH was started by a seniors program participant, after it was found that existing local yoga classes were too expensive for many of the NH seniors. She volunteered to take classes to learn and be able to teach yoga, and now leads the seniors program in yoga.

The Neighbourhood House approach is grounded in the belief that individuals and communities are the experts in their own lives, and that every person has strengths and assets to contribute to the greater good, and valuable friendship to share.

While seniors often experience a feeling of being overlooked or unimportant, in neighbourhood houses they are welcomed and appreciated as volunteers, active contributors, and as wise elders in their families and in the community. Memory has been called the mother of community, and seniors carry much of our communities' memory and history.

Focusing on the strengths, abilities and interests of community members leads to looking for opportunities to further develop these community assets, and provide possibilities for engagement in the life of the neighbourhood. Staff and volunteers in neighbourhood houses encourage people in the community to share their ideas and help start new programs. Training needs are identified in relation to the particular need and initiative, and are developed and provided to all who are interested.

Each of the three neighbourhood houses in this study delivers training programs to seniors so the seniors can assist or lead programs, provide information, and encourage their peers to engage in neighbourhood house activities. In South Vancouver, immigrant seniors partici-

pated in diversity training and take their knowledge out into the community, providing diversity training in seniors and other programs. At Kiwassa, seniors have been trained to provide information and referral services, and supported to deliver these services in several languages. At Kitsilano NH, peer support training is provided to volunteers who are matched to clients in need of support with similar age and life experiences.

Neighbourhood houses work in the same way within all program areas and demographic groups, empowering and encouraging youth, adults, parents, newcomers and all, to be active participants and leaders in the community. One significant result is that people of all backgrounds, cultures and ages are connecting with each other and their peers, and bringing new people into the neighbourhood house activities. In turn, the neighbourhood house and its resources are well used, and is trusted in the community.

Through respecting and encouraging the strengths, experience and skills of its community members, the whole person is seen and engaged, and is able to make strong contributions back to the community. The mutuality of NH relationships creates an entirely different result for people, and for the community, than when people are primarily a receiver of service.

Strong Partnerships with Other Organizations and Service Providers

Neighbourhood houses could not be as effective as they are, without the support and partnership of other organizations and groups who bring and generously share strengths, expertise, resources, information and support.

Partnerships vary in terms of the resources each party brings, be it space, materials, facilitators, training, workshops, participants or something else entirely. Each one contributes what they can, and the program is for the community. The key to the partnership is that there is clear agreement on the shared goal, program activities, roles and responsibilities, and on communication. Experience has shown that having these things decided upon (by those with the authority to decide), and written into an agreement, is very helpful in gaining clarity from the start, and in addressing concerns or challenges that may arise.

Immigrant-serving organizations, including AMSSA (Affiliation of Multicultural Social Service Agencies), SUCCESS, ISS (Immigrant Services Society), MOSAIC, and Settlement Workers in Schools all partner with the NHs. Legal services, including People's Law School, Legal Services Society, and UBC law students provide supports within the NH. Vancouver Coastal Health provides flu clinics, hearing clinics and caregiver support programs; Mental Health Teams provide depression screening and facilitators for support groups for seniors with a mental illness.

At Kits House, UBC School of Music and Kitsilano High School provide music and drama to the seniors drop-in on a monthly basis.



New Horizons

When the federal New Horizons funding program recently invited proposals for new seniors projects, Kiwassa staff took that opportunity to their seniors advisory committee, made up of Chinese, Spanish and English speaking program participants. The seniors focused on ideas to keep strengthening the cross cultural friendships and understanding amongst themselves, and decided they would like to share natural home remedies from their different cultures, and publish them in a small book. A working committee of seven seniors was formed to oversee the project and they met 13 times to plan, organize and discuss the project. They received support from staff and advice from a registered herbalist to ensure remedies were safe.

Four students from the alternative high school program based at Kiwassa interviewed seniors and helped write down the remedies. They all reported finding this extremely enjoyable. Twenty two seniors, from ten different countries of origin, participated. There was a tremendous excitement within the seniors program for the six months of this project, with lots of story sharing and friendship developing across the cultures and languages.

In total 47 remedies were shared and written in the booklet: "Promoting Natural Health Across the Generations", which was published in English, Chinese and Spanish. People were eager to get the published booklet, and shared it proudly with their friends and families. Increased interest in, and many informal discussions about, natural health and health promotion resulted.

Westside Seniors Peer Support

The Westside Seniors Peer Support Program came about three years ago after a group of Westside Service Providers realized a need for peer counselling to help seniors in the community that were experiencing depression, isolation and loss from relocation or a new living situation, separation from family members, bereavement, health and aging and anxiety. After researching other Peer Support Programs, the group began to source out funding to start the program and applied to New Horizons for Seniors. In 2007, 12 peer volunteers undertook 150 hours of training. Since then, the peer support program has trained 23 volunteers and will train 12 more this year to provide no-cost counselling and support services to older adults. Volunteers are men and women over the age of 55 who have experienced some of the same life challenges seniors may be facing.

*"It has been rewarding to help someone who is in distress for an indefinite time. She feels privileged to do this service and hear people's life stories with their mistakes and honesty."
(Peer Support Volunteer.)*

The group of service providers has since developed into the Westside Seniors Empowerment Coalition, representing seniors living on Vancouver's Westside. It is an umbrella group of individuals, community health providers, community organizations and agencies. Presently, the coalition is focusing on transportation and has met with Translink on three different occasions. They are working collaboratively with other community organizations and stakeholders to look into alternative methods of transportation for seniors and helping to raise driver/public awareness around seniors.

Further Partnership Examples...



411 Seniors Centre has expertise in information and referral programs, and was the natural partner for Kiwassa to look to in developing its multicultural information and referral project. 411 Seniors Centre provides volunteer training, resource information, peer mentors, falls prevention and other education workshops that neighbourhood houses link their seniors to.

At Kitsilano NH, a local volunteer and retired nurse provides blood pressure testing every week, before the seniors lunch. Seniors with health concerns or issues are given advice and referrals from this friendly, familiar face.

The South Vancouver Seniors' Council, composed of seniors, and seniors' serving organizations, was formed (with funding for a coordinator from the City of Vancouver) several years ago to build community and organizational capacity to address seniors' issues and needs in southeast

Vancouver. Through this council SVNH, South Vancouver Seniors Network, Killarney Community Centre, Southeast Vancouver Arts and Cultural Society and SUCCESS meet regularly to share information, to develop and co-deliver seniors' activities and to advocate for seniors' resources. For example, it was identified that the Chinese seniors in the community were underserved: SUCCESS, an immigrant-serving agency, offered to run a weekly program at the NH facility. Every week 60-80 Chinese seniors meet to hear a presentation from a guest speaker on topic of interest, enjoy entertainment, and take part in celebrations. Sometimes participants from other SVNH programs join the program. However, this program is about to change as SUCCESS funding has ended. The Seniors' Council is solving this problem by working together, building community capacity to sustain this program as part of the Neighbourhood House-based collection of volunteer-driven seniors programs. By June 2009 seniors will be running their own Chinese seniors program with support from Seniors Council staff.

Participants, volunteers, staff and partners enter a Neighbourhood House, bringing with them their

personalities, skills, strengths, interests.



House Key Concepts and Practices:

- Strengths and Assets-Based Approach;
- Warm and Welcoming Environment;
- Engagement: Feeling of Local Ownership;
- Volunteer Engagement in Programs and Peer Support;
- Commitment to Inclusion;
- Grassroots Approach;
- Multigenerational Dynamic System;
- Staff Resources;
- Partnerships; and
- Commitment to Sustainability.



House Activities:

- Needs Identification;
- Capacity Building;
- Outreach to Others;
- Research and Planning; and
- Program Activities.



This gives rise to community development resulting in neighbourhoods where people feel they belong, they are safe, and they make a difference. Accomplishments occur and the process begins anew as new needs are identified.



Seniors can get involved in the Neighbourhood Houses through many different ways and points of entry: bringing grandchildren to day care or family programs, participating in cultural celebrations, attending an advertised senior's health clinic, being encouraged to come along to a craft class by a friend, or responding to a call for volunteer help.

Neighbourhood Houses have many ways of advertising their programs:

- *Brochures and flyers distributed through schools, libraries, health centres, community centres;*
- *Seniors program newsletters distributed to seniors on the mailing list and in programs;*
- *Use of local and first language media to advertise programs and events;*
- *Websites of the NHs and other groups;*
- *Outreach events and activities, such as: Open Houses, seniors information tables at local banks, community events, diversity health fair;*
- *Information and referrals by health centres, home care nurses, pharmacists, social workers, and community partners; and*
- *Word of mouth, encouragement of neighbours, seniors inviting other seniors.*

Sometimes existing seniors groups use the NH as a resource. For example, the Vancouver Vietnamese Seniors' Society holds their Saturday lunch and social event once a month at Kiwassa NH. Kiwassa provides free space for the activities, free storage space, and use of the Kiwassa mailing address as the business address for the society.

When seniors find their way into the NH and into programs, they are welcomed and introduced around, and encouraged to join in with activities. From there, it is often a short journey to the senior becoming active in programs, sharing ideas for new activities, and rolling up their sleeves and pitching in as a program volunteer.

Many of the programs and activities for seniors are run, on a day to day basis, by the seniors themselves. As a matter of course, they make the tea and get out the cards or the craft supplies. Usually senior's program staff play a role also, which allows for checking in on how people are doing, and being available to provide one to one support, settlement services, accompaniment and assistance, and advocacy if needed.

When seniors find their way into the NH and into programs, they are welcomed and introduced around, and encouraged to join in with activities.



Seniors that use NHs represent a broad age range (from 55 to 100), and a multitude of cultures. Programs are designed with input from seniors and are free or low cost to promote access. Volunteers and more able seniors assist those more frail attending programs. English speakers reach out to immigrants struggling to communicate in English.

NH senior's programs are primarily social, health, wellness and educational groups, with additional one to one supports being given to seniors who identify a need for assistance. Following are the main types of programs offered through Neighbourhood Houses (however, not all programs are offered in each house, as this depends on resources, as well as the particular interests of seniors in each neighbourhood):

Fitness activities. Usually organized on a weekly basis, and led by volunteers or staff, the program activities evolve over time with changing senior's interests. Currently, within the three NHs studied fitness activities include yoga, walking clubs, swimming, tai chi, osteofit, wellness chair exercises and line dancing.

Bus trips. These popular activities take seniors around the city, visiting places like Stanley Park, Granville Island, the Buddhist Temple, cultural gardens, shops and parks. Sometimes the NH van is used, other times public transit is used. There is often physical activity included, as seniors walk to the bus or stroll around gardens or shopping areas. Bus trips out of the city give seniors access to locations they may not otherwise access, such as Harrison Lake or Minter Gardens in the Fraser Valley.

Bus trips are intentionally organized so that participants include the different language / cultural groups going together on the trips. This helps build connections and intercultural friendships and helps new immigrant seniors practice their English.



Social and recreational programs. Activities include cards, bingo, sing-alongs, mahjong, scrabble, crafts, knitting and more. Many of these programs do not require staff or volunteer assistance; just space, the tea kettle and cups, advertising in the seniors program brochures, and storage space for materials.

Health, Wellness and Nutrition. Senior's health and wellness programs in the NHs include: blood pressure checks, blood glucose testing, hearing clinics, depression clinics, flu clinics, and information and referrals.

Educational workshops, discussions and support groups, include: living with a chronic disease, falls prevention, healthy eating, healthy lifestyles, caregiver support, mental health, talks by pharmacists and nutritionists, and other interests the seniors identify.

Lunches, dinners, special celebrations and nutritious snacks are important components of seniors programs. Food brings people together, both physically and socially, and brings warmth and nurturing energy. Sharing food from different cultures helps promote intercultural interest and friendship.

ESL and Settlement. New immigrant seniors participate in English language classes specifically designed for seniors, and practice English within other seniors activities. They get support from settlement seniors workers, including translation, interpretation, assistance with forms, and information and referral. As well, many workshops and discussions are organized to help the newcomers learn about life in Canada, manage the many stresses of adapting and settling in their new country, and building confidence and intercultural connections.

Adult day care: Some NHs, including South Vancouver NH, operate adult day care programs for seniors. Designed for assisting more frail seniors to live independently, or to give respite for a caregiver. program components include transportation to and from the program, meals, personal care, as well as social and recreational activities.

Seniors Links: Delivered in partnership with local colleges, seniors who require low-cost help around the house or yard, or assistance with shopping or trips to appointments, are connected with students who need to earn extra income for education or extra expenses. The senior directly hires a student from names given them by the NH.

Intergenerational activities: Intergenerational connections are encouraged through cultural celebrations, open houses, community dinners and other special events that are open to all in the community. Children, families, adults and seniors all intermingle and enjoy each others company.

Seniors and NHs sometimes organize specific intergenerational programs such as: bi-monthly play times and lunches within a day care program; computer classes where seniors and children use and learn on computers together; and a special Latin American cultural event with the NH out-of-school program, funded by a neighbourhood small grant the seniors received.

One to one support and outreach: One to one support provided by staff on an as needed basis is very important. Staffs are experienced and knowledgeable about issues and resources for seniors, and many are trained in providing supportive counseling or settlement and adaptation services. Housing is an important and very difficult challenge that many seniors face as they age, and the senior's program staff provide information and assistance, often to the family as well. Likewise, staff sometimes accompany the seniors, and provide translation and advocacy.

Volunteers available through neighbourhood houses' peer support programs, provide friendly visits to home or hospital, chat on the phone or go for walks together. Volunteers trained in information and referrals also provide one to one support to seniors.

Toonie Tuesdays



Making Friends, Making Connections - The "Toonie Tuesday" drop-in at Kitsilano NH is bringing together neighbours. The program provides older adults a place to socialize and meet people. It also includes educational speakers, artistic performances, entertaining games, cultural activities, intergenerational connections and a bowl of nutritious homemade hot soup. Seniors are coming forth and taking leadership roles within the program some are even giving power point presentations and talks on a wide variety of subjects. There's talk of putting together a cook book with all the soup recipes and stories from the participants and the proceeds going back into the program for future development. Seniors are beginning to look at training opportunities for skill building that will continue to build community capacity within the program.

How the Kiwassa Seniors Program Began

In about 1990, a group of seniors living in East Vancouver, calling themselves the Seniors Wellbeing Activation Team (SWAT), was pulled together by Mary Bosze, a long time social activist who, herself now a senior, was turning her attention to the needs of local isolated and frail seniors.

This volunteer group of seniors began an outreach program to keep in contact with the isolated seniors, through regular friendly telephone calls, checking in on how the seniors were doing. Relationships were built and information was shared about needs, worries and resources.

Kiwassa NH was asked to provide free space for the volunteers, and a telephone; this was willingly given. Kiwassa was in the process of developing a new NH facility in a new location, and was told by SWAT that they better be sure to have a designated Seniors Activity Room for the seniors. Again, this was done. SWAT wrote grants at this time, and found funds for a part time Seniors Program worker, to make connections with seniors and to develop social, health and wellness programs for seniors. SWAT and Kiwassa wrote grants and received funds to furnish and equip the new Seniors Program Activity Room.

SWAT, a basically Caucasian group, looked at the changing neighbourhood demographics and its impacts on seniors -- who were becoming more isolated due to increasing language barriers between neighbours -- and made a pivotal decision. In 1993, they hired a Chinese speaking social worker who had immigrated from Hong Kong. She remains a strong part of the Kiwassa Seniors Program staff team to this day in providing multicultural programs that engage and integrate seniors from a variety of cultural backgrounds and languages together in programs.

Soon after this, SWAT handed the

management and grant writing for the Seniors Program over to Kiwassa NH, while remaining very active in the newly formed Seniors Program Advisory Committee, and active as volunteers in the seniors program and in the community.

In 1993, the Vancouver Foundation agreed to provide a three year start up grant to launch a range of seniors health, wellness and educational programs for the diverse seniors at Kiwassa. Later, Vancouver Coastal Health, through its SMART fund, began funding half of the seniors program coordinator position, and many of the program expenses; this funding continues to this day. In addition, settlement funding has been in place for this program since the mid 1990s, supporting settlement and integration activities including ESL classes.

The Seniors Program also benefited in the mid 1990s when Kiwassa asked Anne Kloppenburg, City of Vancouver Social Planner for Seniors, to lead workshops for seniors serving agencies to share ideas about creating inclusive, integrated multicultural seniors programs. Twenty six agencies participated in two workshops.

Kiwassa then developed intentional written strategies for building integrated, inclusive multicultural seniors programs and activities. Strategies developed and still used today include: diverse staff providing integrated program activities together and translating within the activities (lunch, socials, crafts, bus trips, health services); Seniors Program advisory committee with active participation of all cultural and language groups (translation provided during meetings); ESL classes and informal ESL practice within many programs and activities; seniors from diverse backgrounds and languages volunteering together in programs and at local community festivals, businesses and special events, to outreach to and invite their peer seniors into the NH programs

History of South Vancouver Neighbourhood House South Asian Senior Women's Group

In 1987 South Vancouver neighbourhood house (SVNH) hired a part-time South Asian Worker through federal government settlement services funding, to outreach to the South Asian community and develop programs to meet their needs. Working in collaboration with MOSAIC, a local settlement service agency and Sunset Community Centre, which provided program space, a program was developed where seniors could socialize, access information about needed services and learn about life in Canada.

Many of the pioneer members of that initial women's group volunteered with SVNH for many years. For example, volunteers organized a monthly South Asian lunch which ran for 10 years until South Asian restaurants expanded in the area, thus reducing demand for the lunch. The women's group continues to evolve, reflecting changing needs and interests of its 70 members. The group is recognized by Vancouver Coastal Health as a way to bridge health services for South Asian seniors. Nurses and other healthcare professionals visit the group and provide information needed for seniors to remain healthy.

The women's group members have been encouraged to expand leadership roles and to integrate with other SVNH senior's programs provided in English. The cultural mixing of seniors is challenging due to English language barriers. Members of the South Asian women's group with fluent English act as ambassadors for the non-English speaking seniors, encouraging them to attend the weekly wellness lunch at the SVNH site. The wellness program, funded by Vancouver Coastal Health, provides nutrition information and a basic exercise routine to maintain core muscle strength. As trust has built the South Asian seniors have gained a few words of English and are more confident

joining their English peers in seniors programs offered at the SVNH site.

The South Asian senior's program has grown and has added new elements and partnerships over its 22 year span. For example, in partnership with Sunset Community Centre, a weekly volunteer driven South Asian Men's group was formed and currently has 72 members. In collaboration with South Vancouver Mental Health (which provides funding for program supplies and an activity worker) a women's mental health support group meets weekly at SVNH site. Since 2002, a City of Vancouver capacity building grant has made possible formation of a senior's council to build capacity for SVNH seniors to work with community organizations to plan, coordinate and expand services for seniors living in the area. South Asian seniors are members of this multicultural council providing grassroots leadership for addressing senior's needs and issues.

Since 2007, a three year immigrant senior's grant from the United Way has helped SVNH expand immigrant senior's leadership skills. Trained South Asian seniors are now undertaking community outreach through asset mapping, leading dialogue circles encouraging cultural integration, and starting new volunteer driven seniors programs such as the South Asian seniors walking club, seniors family fun night and a second South Asian women's group. South Asian seniors are working along side other seniors as founding members of a new seniors centre society formed to create a local seniors centre. In 2008 a United Way "senior's independence grant" has enabled SVNH to bring together the South Asian senior men's and senior women's groups to advance their program leadership skills and tools for creating and sustaining programs delivered through their own initiative. The story of this project is covered in the case study on page 27.

In 1972 a group of neighbours realized a need for a Neighbourhood House on the Westside that would help to strengthen and unite the community as well as promote a sense of belonging. This Neighbourhood House would take the place of Alexandra House that had been destroyed by fire. With this vision in mind, they set about and purchased three lots located on the North West corner of 7th and Vine to establish what is now Kitsilano Neighbourhood House.

The seniors program at Kitsilano NH was seeded over thirty years ago when the Hall was then owned by the Greek Orthodox Church and was a place for seniors from the church to come together to share a hot meal. After the sale of the church, the present board of the Neighbourhood House agreed along with the members of the Church to continue to provide a hot lunch program and thus, began the provision of opportunities for seniors to come together and be socially connected.

In 2002, a new Executive Director was hired who recognized that the number of seniors in our community was increasing, especially older, more vulnerable seniors. Funding was sought through Direct Access Gaming funds to help support this hot lunch program, learn more about the needs and strengths of the seniors participating and those living in the community.

With the receipt of funding a part time staff person was hired to work with the seniors and the community to support the develop of the Seniors Hot Lunch Program and engage in a process to learn more about the seniors living in our community. Conversations with Seniors and senior serving organizations indicated a need for more physical and social activities. Seniors began to take more ownership over the program and started to develop new initiatives and activities. Seniors began planning out trips and using the KNH van to take them to places throughout the lower mainland. A partnership was established with the BC Women's Hospital and Osteofit was offered prior to the hot lunch. Seniors began

accessing the KNH low income tax clinic and younger seniors started volunteering to help others in their community to file their income tax. Under the direction of the seniors the hot lunch program began to transform itself into a more comprehensive program that better met their needs.

In 2006, the Westside Seniors Empowerment Coalition(WSEC) was established. This Coalition brought together seniors, those working with seniors, public partners and local business to network, share resources and identify gaps in service to seniors living on the Westside. These connections helped to inform the ongoing growth of the Seniors hot lunch program which was renamed the "Toonie Tuesday" Seniors Drop-in and informed the development of other senior's programs offered at KNH. Currently the Drop-in offers social engagement activities, cultural activities, intergenerational activities, brain gym, massage therapy, blood pressure clinics, presentations by local seniors on a variety of topics, volunteer opportunities, out trips, celebrations and we continue to grow.

The WSEC provided leadership for the development of a Seniors Peer Support Program, providing formal training to 24 seniors to be lay councillors for other seniors in the community who are dealing with grief and loss issues and who are home-bound, and developed the Seniors links program which pairs over 100 seniors each year with Post Secondary Students who provide services to the seniors such as shopping, computer set up, painting and cleaning. The Coalition has taken on issues such as Elder Abuse using theatre as the medium for seniors to teach others in their community about Elder Abuse. Currently the WSEC is addressing the need for public transportation that meets the needs of seniors living in Kitsilano. The Coalition is working with Translink in the hopes that public transportation that meets the mobility needs of seniors will be made available.

In 2007 a Seniors Advisory Committee, consisting of existing seniors volunteers, was established to support the direction and future growth of the drop in.

Programs and activities that grow and develop through NHs come out of the needs, concerns and hopes that people in the community have, with the NH being an important resource. Therefore in designing and in evaluating programs, the focus is on the hoped for benefit or outcome.



Kiwassa's Seniors Healthy Community Project received international recognition and two awards to continue to foster healthy aging across cultures.

Desired NH Seniors Program Outcomes

Immediate outcomes:

- Seniors gain information and skills needed for personal development and healthy aging;
- Seniors gain participation in activities needed for healthy aging and disease prevention;
- Seniors of all backgrounds gain participation in enjoyable activities building friendships and meaningful connections with seniors and others in the community; and develop mutual support;
- Seniors gain meaningful community participation, contributing their skills, knowledge and experience as volunteers;
- Seniors receive non-stigmatizing services and information needed for meeting physical and emotional needs; and
- The partnership model leads to other opportunities which further develops programs scope and breadth.

Intermediate outcomes:

- Seniors have the knowledge, skills and social connections they need for healthy aging;
- Seniors feel respected for their unique skills, capacities, and life experiences and are actively engaged in community participation;
- Seniors' service needs are identified and addressed as part of a continuum of relationships and activities found in the NH setting;
- Seniors have increased understanding and appreciation of diversity and hold connections with seniors of diverse backgrounds and identities; and
- Senior's groups and individuals have capacity for working together addressing social issues and service needs felt in the community.

Long-Term outcomes:

- Seniors lead healthy and productive lives as part of the community. *See Logic Model, Appendix 4, for more information.*



Connections and Successes

The connections amongst the seniors in NH seniors programs and with the staff of the seniors program are very close, with a great deal of time spent together cooking, telling jokes and stories, doing crafts, practicing English together, going on outings. People look out for each other, and if someone does not show up for programs, the other seniors or the staff ask around or phone them. When sick, seniors are often called or visited. Seniors often describe the NH program as their “second family”, and “second home”.

When one senior in her 80's became sick and had to go into the hospital, her family and the hospital social worker felt she would never be able to return home, and started to look for a long term care facility. She surprised them all by getting better quickly, insisting that she needed to get back to her friends at the Neighbourhood House.

When a long time senior participant passed away, the memorial was held at the Neighbourhood House. Relatives spoke about how much their mother / grandmother had appreciated her involvement in the NH: “Grandma was much happier once she joined the program here, as she had so many friends. Before that, she was much grumpier, but the last years of her life were very happy.”

For the purpose of this review, 97 seniors were surveyed about their experiences of NH seniors programs in Kitsilano, Kiwassa and South Vancouver NHs. Language and cultural groups represented included: Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Punjabi, English, and Vietnamese.

Here is what the seniors who use the three NHs said in regards to the following statements about when they participate in programs through the Neighbourhood House:

I was amazed at the number of programs you have here. I feel most of the statements are true but I'm a relative newcomer and haven't participated much; however the opportunity to participate is there. I found it very interesting. Friendliness is very welcoming. I have a great sense of belonging. I think the programs are smaller and very personal. When I was new in the neighborhood, through the program I got connection to the area. I get to know everyone and share with people about a lot of things. There is a feeling of belonging here. The weekly hot lunch is very special; home cooked. N.H. has a warm relaxed welcoming attitude. I feel at home. I feel myself, to have a place in the neighborhood house. Staff are genuinely interested in people. Have good programs. Very friendly and welcoming. Great place to meet different cultures. Participate in unity; make a difference in the community. Good work!

For each statement, please answer if, in your experience, this is true most of the time, some of the time or never. When I participate in programs through the Neighbourhood House,

Answer Options	Most of the Time	Some of the Time	Never	Response Count
I have an opportunity to learn	66	22	0	88
I stay or get healthy	58	18	2	78
I learn about myself	47	23	2	72
I learn about my community	54	26	3	83
I learn about other cultures	47	28	3	78
Any other comments...				4
<i>Answered Question</i>				93



“My neighbor is 85 years old and I’m certain your Osteofit classes and social activities have helped her maintain her energy, well being, and independence. It is a most valuable contribution to her and her friends health and vitality!”



For each statement, please answer if, in your experience, this is true, false or if you are not sure. Neighbourhood House programs:

Answer Options	True	False	Not sure	Response Count
Make a difference in my life	81	0	3	84
Make a difference in my community	78	0	4	82
Please feel free to comment:				10
<i>Answered Question</i>				88
<i>Skipped Question</i>				9



Please feel free to add any additional information about your experiences at the Neighbourhood House:

Response Text

Very friendly and welcoming.

Julie and Ray are genuinely interested in people. Have good programs

They have some good programs

Found it very interesting

Keep it up!

Friendliness very welcoming

Have a great sense of belonging.

More brain gym exercises

My neighbor is 85 years old and I'm certain your osteofit classes and social activities have helped her maintain her energy, well being, and independence. It is a most valuable contribution to her and her friends healthy and vitality!

I get to know everyone, share with people about a lot of things.

There is a feeling of belonging here. The weekly hot lunch is very special. Home cooked.

social contact

I feel myself, to have a place in the neighborhood house.

great place to meet different cultures. Participate in unity; make a difference in the community

Need more people to play cards.

N.H. has a warm relaxed welcoming attitude. I feel at home.

I feel most of the statements are true but I'm a relative newcomer and haven't participated much; however the opportunity to participate is there.

Good work!

Some answers are because of my mothers experiences

It's difficult. I want to ask someone speaks Turkish.

Are different than a seniors' centre's -- Don't know

I was amazed at the number of programs you have here.

I think the programs are smaller and very personal.

when new in the neighborhood through NB got connection to the area

Keep up the good work!

I stay or get healthy, nourishing soups

I wish to get my English better.

For each statement, please answer if, in your experience, this is true most of the time, some of the time or never. When I participate in programs through the Neighbourhood House,

Answer Options	Most of the time	Some of the time	Never	Response Count
I feel connected to other people like myself	64	22	0	86
I feel connected to other people different than me	49	33	2	84
I have a chance to meet people of different ages	53	25	2	80
I have a chance to meet people of different cultures	61	21	1	83
I feel welcome and included in my community	69	17	0	86
I feel productive; I can accomplish things and be helpful	54	21	6	81
I have a chance to use my skills and strengths	35	37	3	75
I have a chance to make a difference with others	39	33	3	75
I feel respected; people ask for my opinion and listen to my ideas	53	28	1	82
People understand me and can help me if needed	54	28	0	82
I know who to talk to if I have questions	66	20	2	88
Any other comments...				
<i>Answered Questions</i>				92

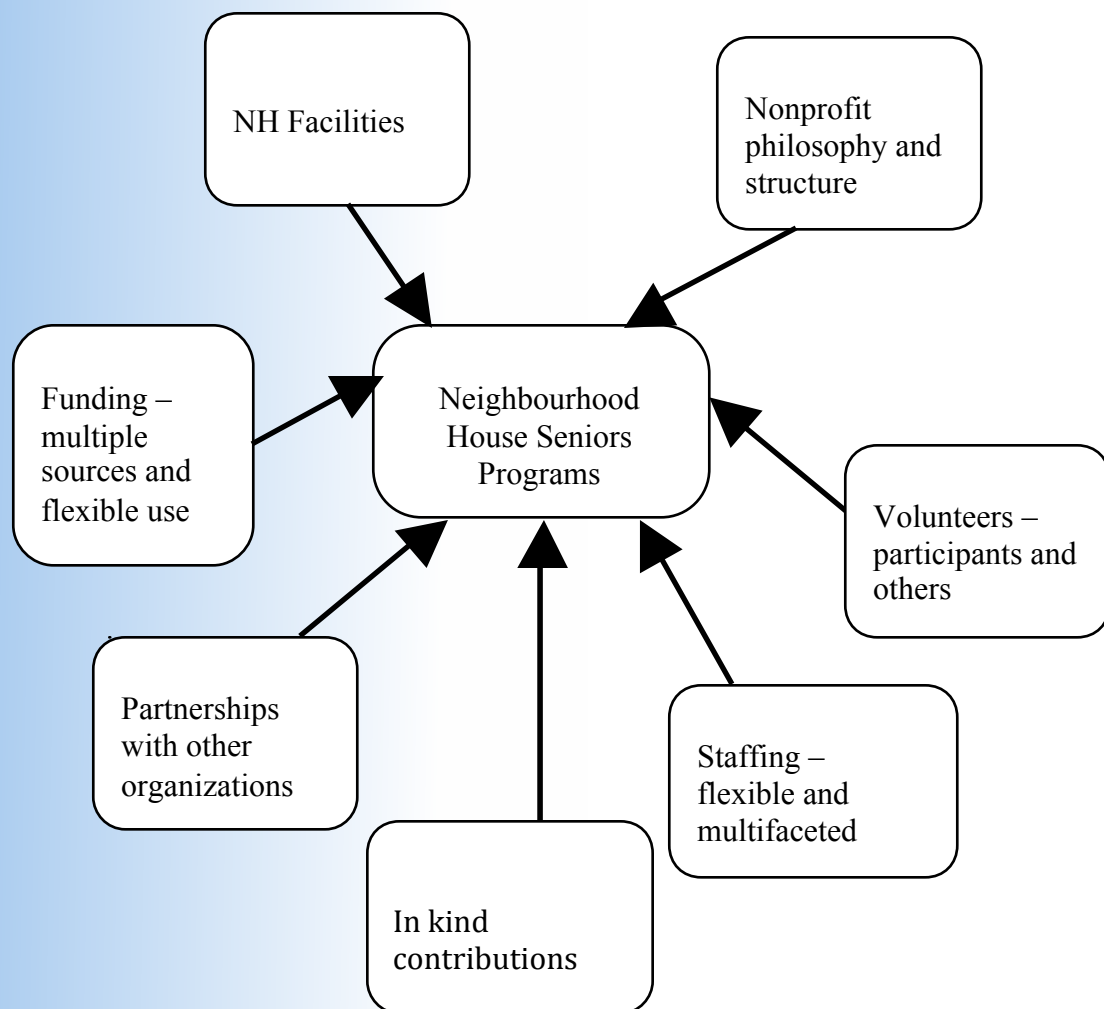


Neighbourhood Houses in Vancouver, together with seniors, volunteers, and community partners, have been able to sustain effective programs for seniors for decades. While some of the programs and activities have changed, the neighbourhood houses have sustained a broad continuum of programs and services to meet a variety of needs and desires of diverse seniors in the community. This has happened despite limited resources and challenging realities.

The history of NHs and the senior's programs are rich, and filled with many stories. These stories, and the successes, friendships, partnerships and relationships that have developed, are the sustenance through which programs continue, often despite unpredictable and limited resources and other challenges. People in NHs and the community fight for the seniors programs, persist in seeking resources needed, and advocate for the needs of seniors.

Neighbourhood Houses are integrated organizations committed to working with all of the community to address a broad range of community issues and provide an extensive scope of programs and services. Therefore, they have the advantage of having a broad base of support and resources which support the sustainability of their work and programs.

The NH sustainability approach can best be described as a dynamic, balanced system of several interconnected strategies. These strategies are: non-profit philosophy and structure; funding: multiple sources and flexible use; volunteers and community engagement; staffing which is flexible and multi-faceted; partnerships with other organizations; neighbourhood house facilities. No one strategy stands alone; each strategy is interconnected with the others and is critical for sustainability. See the diagram below.



Non-profit philosophy and structure:

The organizational experience and capacity to deliver and administer programs effectively maintains stability and sustainability. NHs have several characteristics inherent in all well-run non-profit organizations: passion for and commitment to the mission and vision of the organization; being accountable to all stakeholders; maintaining professionalism in management and front line work; being creative and entrepreneurial developers and fundraisers.

Funding: multiple sources and flexible use:

Multi-service funding from multiple sources are critical for NHs to function and thrive. NHs receive funds from all levels of government, usually as contracts for service, to support their programs and work. Foundations, granting organizations, businesses, and donors provide support. Social enterprise initiatives are also undertaken for added resources, as are fundraising activities. Donations are solicited or offered that support seniors: money, food, program supplies, equipment and space in the community for outreach activities.

These funds contribute towards sustaining the full range of programs as well as the infrastructure such as management, facilities, equipment and administration of programs. Some funding sources are for seniors-specific programming; others are for services and activities for other groups; and some can be used flexibly to support a range of programs areas. Programs can address multiple needs and be eligible for funding from a variety of sources.

NH staff keep up to date on funding opportunities, in part due to multiple sources of information. NH staff often funds that can support a multitude of programs, such as food security grants to buy kitchen equipment used by all groups, including seniors.

While programs generally must pay an administrative fee out of program funding sources, the NH can sometimes stretch its resources to sustain specific programs, through reducing those administration fees, when program funding is decreased.

Volunteers and community engagement:

Neighbourhood houses engage community members in all aspects of the NH work. Seniors are at the forefront of the design, delivery and evaluation of their programs. Ideas are welcomed and encouraged, and an active problem solving approach is taken. The neighbourhood house philosophy and culture is “can-do”. Concerns are listened to and acted upon.

This means programs are successful, and change to reflect changing needs and interests. This creates strong ownership and commitment from the seniors and the community for the programs to continue to grow and be strong. When important programs stop due to loss of resources, there are continued attempts to bring them back in a new form, or to find ways to sustain them through capacity building of volunteers.

Staffing which is flexible and multi-faceted:

Sustaining staff is a necessary part of sustaining programs, as staff develop and maintain strong relationships, information, expertise and social capital for the NH and its programs. NHs have several strategies for sustaining programs through staffing: Structure: Program coordinators provide leadership, direct service, consistency, connection within the NH and in the broader community, and support for partnerships and volunteers.

Diversity:

Staff are recruited to reflect the diversity and languages in the community. Groups that are often marginalized therefore have access and opportunities; this creates a strong sense of trust and loyalty. In turn, community members become active volunteers.

Flexibility:

NHs often employ staff to work part time in more than one program area when budgets are limited, as a way to provide sufficient employment to retain the staff. This has two benefits: the sharing and integration of ideas and program areas; and flexibility in being able to move staff around, and therefore keep them, when funding is decreased in a program area.

Partnerships with other organizations:

Community partners provide invaluable expertise, resources, supports and information to the NH programs for seniors. Sometimes programs are offered by partners within the NH, increasing accessibility for seniors who would not otherwise be able to participate.

Relationships are actively maintained between groups, organizations, and funders. Information is shared freely, help is offered and accepted, and new partnerships form in a fluid and natural way. This takes considerable time, but has large pay-offs.

Shared responsibilities for staffing, program space and other resources are negotiated through combining various types of in-kind contributions including staff, space use and other resources. Inherent in these connections is the support of other organizations and individuals who have a stake in the sustainability of the NH program. Well maintained partnerships can fill gaps when other resources are strained. Furthermore, joint planning and problem solving can facilitate creative solutions to address seniors' changing needs.

The reciprocal nature of partnerships ensures that the connections are mutually supportive. For example, Neighbourhood Houses may offer volunteers to policing centres or community events to support other organizations which may have supported them in the past. Recently, South Vancouver NH responded to the local Punjabi business community to assist them with acquiring banners to bring attention to their shopping district. This is a creative way to stay involved with the community while investing in social capital that can be utilized down the road.

**Neighbourhood House facilities:**

The NH space itself sustains senior's programs, as it is a welcoming, visible gathering place and community hub that the community sees and uses as an important resource. With many points of entry and reasons for connecting, the NH facility encourages the community to come together to share ideas and concerns and to use the resources available.

Space and equipment is made available, sometimes for free, for programs and activities within the welcoming environment of the neighbourhood house. Spaces and equipment are multi-use, and shared between all who use the NH. People are empowered to use the resources available, whether they are staff, neighbours or part of other organizations.

1. Fund Seniors Program Coordinator positions within Neighbourhood Houses

The role of the NH Seniors Program Coordinator is essential to the work NHs do to support seniors in our communities. Program coordinators in NHs have the following crucial roles:

- *Lead, train and work alongside volunteers and front line staff*
- *Understand community needs, assets, trends and opportunities*
- *Maintain relationships, networks and partnerships*
- *Work collaboratively with other programs within the NH, creating new possibilities*
- *Develop and support programs within the programs, and*
- *Ensure programs achieve desired outcomes.*

Seniors program coordinators can, through the capacity building and partnership approach, leverage many additional resources into the community for seniors. The position is essential in being a link and support to informal groups and to volunteers who have tremendous ability to lead and facilitate effective supports to seniors and the community.

Resources for community-based seniors programs and services are very limited. Funding NH Seniors Program Coordinators is a very cost efficient and effective means to leverage limited dollars for a broad range of effective, sustainable and relevant supports for seniors.



2. Neighbourhood Houses continue to meet together to share information and resources.

There have been many benefits for the participating NHs undertaking this project to review and describe the neighbourhood house model in working with seniors. The discussions and the sharing of stories, ideas, strategies and resources has led to increased capacity for our NHs in our work with seniors. Many of the stories we heard from our colleagues have reinforced our practices, or given us new ideas.

We believe this report will be useful to us in orienting staff and volunteers and in having the language to discuss and improve upon our work.

The NHs should continue to meet and share information, resources and ideas. We should organize an annual event that brings together the executive directors, program directors, coordinators and front line seniors program staff, to celebrate, and share food, stories and new ideas. all levels of staff sharing together. Other Vancouver area neighbourhood houses would be invited to join with us to also share their stories, successes and ideas.

Kiwassa Neighbourhood House: Multicultural Health Information and Referral Project

Community issues:

The East Vancouver community that Kiwassa serves is a very diverse and relatively low income area with a new immigrant population of over 40%. For all seniors in this neighbourhood, there is a shortage of health services, and income and transportation are ongoing barriers to access supports and services.

In the early 2000's, Kiwassa was offered an opportunity to develop a pilot project proposal for a SHARE award. The resulting Multicultural Health Information and Referral Project was undertaken in 2003, ran successfully for three years, and was re-developed during 2008-09 through this UWLM funded case study. The project addressed to key community issues.

The first pressing issue was the ongoing issue of isolation of seniors, particularly new immigrant seniors, and the lack of access they had to community based peer support and health and wellness programs, and needed services. New immigrant seniors have unique needs and many barriers to successfully adapting and settling in Canada and maintaining their well-being. New immigrant seniors face the generational challenges of all seniors, which can include isolation, poverty, physical mobility issues, and the emotional challenges connected to life passages. These challenges are exacerbated for new immigrant seniors in multiple ways.

Immigrant seniors often need greater intervention and support to maintain their health and quality of life and to successfully settle in the new country. Access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health services and information is a pressing challenge for immigrant seniors. Many newcomers cannot afford to pay for programs and activities, struggle with health issues, and live in isolation from community life, which prevents them from integrating and learning and practicing English.

Often new immigrants underestimate the grief and loss that is experienced by leaving one's homeland, community, family and friends, including the loss of day to day support and social status. Adapting to change is often easier for the younger generations, and many seniors experience great difficulty in adjusting to their new environment.

The second issue, which continues to be of considerable concern, is the lack of access to current information about existing resources and services to support the health and wellbeing of seniors. There were many changes in government policy and programs during the early 2000s, resulting in cuts to services and health supports for seniors. There was a lack of information available in the community to understand what resources existed, who delivered them, and how seniors, including immigrant seniors, could access them.

Past partnership and project description:

In 2003, Kiwassa turned to 411 Seniors Centre as the obvious expert partner organization to work with on the project. Kiwassa hired a Project Coordinator who brought extensive background and skills, and who worked with the 411 Seniors' staff who also brought great expertise as well as the resources of 411. Together, they developed and delivered 12 training workshops to volunteers recruited from Kiwassa, 411 Seniors' Centre, and other non-profit organizations who were offered the training opportunity. The Kiwassa project coordinator also created a new information and referral manual, using the new information and benefiting from 411's expertise.

Community engagement and capacity building:

In 2003, twenty-five volunteers, many of them seniors, and four Seniors Program staff participated in the workshops, with a total fluency in seven languages. The workshop format involved bringing in presenters from various programs and resources to get up to date information. This diverse group discussed the information presented and also gave feedback, contributing their own experience and expertise at the community level. Topics included: information and referral; shelter aid for elderly rentals; permanent resident card; legal support and assistance; medical services plan; guardianship and representative agreements; translink and transportation support; income supports and benefits; seniors housing information, and more.

Following the training, the information and referral manual was updated, and produced for the volunteers. Additionally, twelve training sessions took place at Kiwassa to support the volunteers and provide training in advocacy, working with older adults, diversity and communication skills. Two seniors at Kiwassa were key in the decision-making process for this project, working together with staff on a project steering committee, and identifying opportunities for outreach and implementation.

Increased community capacity was also built through the research and development of an extensive library of multilingual health information and referral resources. These were catalogued, and the catalogue shared broadly with other seniors serving organizations. Two mobile libraries were created for outreach venues.

Outreach and information and referral services:

For three years, volunteers provided outreach and peer information and referral support in the Hastings north area through monthly drop-in sessions delivered out of the local community policing centre / business improvement association offices. A total of 10 volunteers, two at a time, provided 103 different four hour sessions out of this storefront location in the busy shopping area of East Hastings.

Thirty nine seniors received individual referrals to health services and other resources, along with an invitation to join the Kiwassa seniors program, located a few blocks north of this shopping area. Frequently, a small group of 3 to 6 seniors would stay together during this drop-in, discussing their lives, sharing information and friendship.

The outreach program eventually ended as volunteers became unavailable, and the community policing centre / business improvement offices moved to a less favourable site in the area which seniors did not readily access.

2008-09: Project renewal:

With funding from the UWLM, the Multicultural Seniors Health Information and Referral Project was rejuvenated in 2008, because the community needs and issues remain.

The previous project coordinator was contracted to update the information in the Info and Referral Manual, and to update the catalogue of multilingual health resources. A new Community and Volunteer Developer at Kiwassa was given additional hours to develop the recruitment and training for new volunteers and move the project forward. Seniors program staff were engaged to provide input and help identify volunteer opportunities. Importantly, the two active senior volunteers from the first project steering committee are active again in providing project advice and oversight.

411 Seniors' Centre is once again a key partner for this project. They developed and led twelve training sessions that volunteers and this project were able to access at no cost. Workshop topics included: legal services; welfare benefits and exceptions; knowing rights and services for newcomers; substance abuse and isolation; advocacy networks and supports; representative agreements; information resources for information and referral counsellors, and more.

Kiwassa has recruited 10 volunteers, including English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Portugese, Vietnamese

and Spanish speaking seniors and three students, and facilitated four of the seniors attending the 411 sessions; all have attended at least 10 of the 13 sessions offered.

The updated information and referral manual is the basis for additional training sessions at Kiwassa, which will be provided by the Community and Volunteer Developer together with the new Seniors Program Coordinator. All volunteers have received a copy of the manual. Volunteer orientation sessions have taken place, as well as sessions on facilitating focus groups; working with seniors; providing information and referral services. More training sessions will be developed and delivered. One of the volunteers, a student studying gerontology, has also been engaged in helping with one of the weekly English language classes for seniors at Kiwassa.

Planning is underway for a series of workshops to be delivered to seniors in English, Chinese and Spanish. For input, a questionnaire was developed, translated and distributed to the seniors active at Kiwassa, for them to identify areas of interest for the workshops. The information will be analyzed shortly. Volunteers and staff are now planning to find the best times for the workshops to be delivered.

This project has invigorated the discussion on finding ways for additional outreach to seniors in the community who do not readily access the seniors programs at the neighbourhood house. Ideas currently being explored include renting a small table at a local, well placed coffee shop for a weekly outreach / information and referral program, and/or use of common room space in a local housing project also operated by Kiwassa, one block from Hastings Street. Having newly trained and committed volunteers, with language capacity to outreach to new immigrants, is a great asset for moving forward on meeting these very real community needs.

South Vancouver Neighbourhood House South Asian Seniors Independence and Participation Project

Introduction

Building on an existing South Asian senior's program this project builds capacity of South Asian seniors to organize and manage for themselves a new wellness program. The seniors created and piloted a 12-week workshop series with support from staff. Staff provides volunteer training to develop the seniors' coordination roles. The training and volunteer responsibilities are captured in a program manual (in English and Punjabi) which serves as a reference guide for running the program in the future.

The Neighbourhood House (NH) model is embedded in the project from conception to implementation. The NH model components include: grass roots community building approach; strong partnerships with other organizations and groups; neighbourhood based and open to all; welcoming facility with community ownership; engaging community strengths and assets; and employing NH sustainability strategies. This case study shows how the model is applied in this particular seniors program.

Grassroots community building approach

According to 2006 census data 70% of the South Asian population of Vancouver resides in the South- East Vancouver neighbourhood of Sunset, with a South Asian population of approximately 9,000. Through community outreach South Asian immigrant seniors were identified as socially isolated and having difficulty accessing mainstream health, mental health and community social services because of cultural and language barriers. Since 1987 South Vancouver Neighbourhood House (SVNH) has been working collaboratively with South Asian community leaders and service providers in Health, Mental Health, and settlement service agencies to address these issues. Funding from Vancouver Coastal Health, City of Vancouver and the United Way have paved the way for developing a continuum of services and community development activities to address South Asian senior's needs.

Strong Partnerships with other groups

With funding from the United Way, SVNH created a partnership with South Asian community leaders, the South Community Health Office, Sunset Community Centre and numerous other local resources for developing and implementing this project. The Health centre and other community resources provides speakers on wellness related topics, the community centre provides space and shares with SVNH supervision of the volunteers. SVNH trains the volunteers and links the seniors with leadership opportunities and services in the wider community.

Neighbourhood Based and open to all

This SVNH satellite program is located at the Sunset Community Center in the heart of the South Asian residential community in Vancouver's Sunset neighbourhood. Seniors living in the area easily access this location. The program is open to any senior. To encourage integration with the wider community South Asian seniors are encouraged to attend the multicultural seniors activities held in English at the SVNH main site.

Welcoming facility with community "ownership"

Through this partnership the Sunset Community Center is better able to serve the South Asian seniors population. They have welcomed the SVNH staff into the center supporting them to bring the NH approach to the facility. To that end the seniors participating as volunteers use the community center kitchen to make snacks and tea to help make the program more welcoming. Programming is free; the community centre space is made available on a weekly basis at no charge to the NH or the community members. Participants are encouraged to buy a community center membership.

Engaging community strengths and abilities (community assets):

Seniors driven processes

Using the NH community engagement model, 12 South Asian seniors were recruited from existing South Asian senior men's and senior women's groups to help with project design and to be trained as program leaders and volunteers. The seniors created a vision for the program and developed a seniors' education series with 12 workshops utilizing local community resources as guest speakers. With the support of staff, the volunteers organized the pilot workshop series. The topics include: Positive Aging; Mental well being; Policing and personal safety; Nutrition/Healthy Eating; Arthritis and Pain Management; Diabetes and Heart Health management; Legal rights and responsibilities for seniors; Disaster preparedness; Laughter and Yoga; Making a will; Legal services and legal aid; Immigration and Federal and Provincial benefits.

Creating space for new ideas and supporting independent initiatives

As a result of the seniors coming together to plan the project they introduced the idea of healthy snacks, which they made for themselves during each session. Additionally some of the seniors organized a walking group, including stretching exercises and a healthy cooking demo at the community centre to encourage a healthy diet. The 12 session workshop series takes place monthly and by adding the walking club to the project the seniors who wish more frequent activity can meet for a walk and social snack.



Volunteer training and engagement

Two South Asian seniors who are involved in the SVNH Seniors as Leaders training helped with the project's volunteer training by providing diversity and leadership training to their peers. Volunteer roles and responsibilities were assigned to manage the project workshop sessions. Volunteers make contacts with the workshop leaders, set up the room, prepare the food and tidy up.

Drawing on NH Sustainability strategies:

Flexible use of staff

Utilizing staff members that deliver a range of programs at the Neighbourhood House enhances project long-term sustainability. The staff member in this case is funded through other funding sources and will remain in the organization to support the project volunteers after the pilot funding ends. Flexibility in job duties allows us to combine staff and volunteer roles. In this case the worker was able to free some of her time by supporting volunteers in her programs to take leadership and assume some responsibilities helping sustain their own programs.

Multiple funding sources

Funding for SVNH seniors programs, including South Asian programs, comes from a variety of sources including Immigrant Integration Branch of Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, Vancouver Coastal Health, City of Vancouver and the United Way of the Lower Mainland. The variety of funding sources means that the staff is retained in a relatively stable position over time.

Volunteer engagement and trainings builds community capacity for independence

The United Way grant was used for developing the project, facilitating volunteer training and writing a volunteer manual for the program. A project goal was to build the capacity of the seniors to develop and sustain a project that would meet their needs and require minimal demands from the NH staff in the long term. The staff person will minimally support the volunteers in their tasks as part of her existing volunteer coordination role.

The project staff prepared a volunteer manual in Punjabi documenting the steps for volunteers to organize the program for themselves (manual will be available on SVNH website at www.southvan.org). The tools contained in the manual include: Marketing material, outreach strategies, resource lists, registration forms, volunteer job descriptions, volunteer recruitment and training, identifying and utilizing seniors leadership abilities.

Partnerships with other organizations and in kind contributions

Sustainable program development is achieved by pooling community resources. The partnership with the community center means that the facility use space costs are donated. The partnership with South Community Health office means that guest speakers for many of the topics of interest will also be of no cost to the program. Other guest speakers from Red Cross, Legal services, MOSAIC and Community Policing center also donate their time.

Conclusion

The program has a holistic outcome for seniors- in addition to accessing wellness promotion activities such as a walking club, and information from guest speakers on various topics of interest, seniors have the opportunity to expand their self- actualization through volunteerism. Volunteer roles helps seniors find belonging in their new country fighting/preventing depression that may result from the dislocation of immigration.

This project has created lots of community enthusiasm with seniors looking ahead to sustaining the project and incorporating lots of active living and social activities in addition to the education workshops into the program. This project has opened new opportunities for South Asian seniors to remain active in the community as leaders and participants in promoting their own wellness.

Kitsilano Neighbourhood House “Toonie Tuesday” Seniors Drop-In

Introduction

The Westside has one of the highest populations of seniors in the city of Vancouver. They make up of these seniors is quite diverse in terms of culture, income, health, mobility and life experience. The “Toonie Tuesday” Seniors Drop-In was created in response to the diverse needs, interests and strengths of the seniors who attend KNH and those who live in the community. With input and direction from seniors the Drop In has become the first point of entry to Kits House for older adults. The Drop-in provides a warm and welcoming space for seniors in general and for seniors new to the NH. New seniors are welcomed by volunteer greeters, who introduce them to the NH and the Drop- In. The greeters provide a welcome package in one of two languages, share information about how they can be involved in programs, learn new skills, share their knowledge and skills and become fully engaged with other seniors and other community members.

Grassroots community building approach, addressing local concerns

A group of volunteer seniors connected with other programs at the Neighbourhood House came together to form the Advisory Committee for the “Toonie Tuesday” Seniors Drop-in. The “Toonie Tuesday” Seniors Drop-in has grown over the past year under the direction of the seniors. The Advisory group makes decisions based on their own experience, feedback from seniors, information and support from KNH staff. KNH staff use information gathered through local demographics, knowledge shared by community members and those working with seniors who sit on our local Seniors Empowerment Community Development table, evaluations, and focus groups. This process ensures that the programming, environment and resources remain responsive to community need and are offered in a way that encourages active participation of seniors. It is this grassroots approach - that ensures the Drop-in continues to be a meaningful and relevant resource for older adults.

Based within neighbourhoods and open and inclusive of all, multigenerational

The Drop-in is offered in the Kitsilano Neighbourhood, which is within walking distance for most of the seniors and volunteers who attend. For seniors who live further a field or who are too frail to walk they are offered a ride in the KNH van. Any seniors who need to take public transit but are unable to afford bus tickets are provided with tickets through KNH.

Staff and volunteers engage in outreach to the general community and to targeted communities, including immigrant populations, the gay and lesbian seniors community, Musqueam and other local seniors housing facilities.

Our staff reflect the diversity of this population as does the promotional material and room displays.



Multigenerational programming is offered within the program through partnerships with other Neighbourhood House and Community programs such as Childcare, youth programs and local music schools. Within the program itself there is a forty year span between the younger seniors and the older seniors. Often the younger seniors take on the volunteer and leadership role with the older more frail seniors participating in the activities and initiatives.



In order for all seniors to feel welcome a volunteer greeter connects with each new senior orientating them to the program and the Neighbourhood House. A welcome package is provided that includes information on all the other NH programs, volunteer and leadership opportunities. Each week one of the senior volunteers takes on the task of calling all the seniors including any new seniors making sure everyone is aware of the upcoming events and also to ensure everyone is okay.

Welcoming, designed neighbourhood facilities the community feels ownership of

There is clear indication that the seniors feel ownership and comfort in the Drop-in space. Seniors can be seen setting up chairs and tables, cooking in the kitchen and decorating the hall. One volunteer has taken on the task of designing and posting the monthly calendar. This calendar has been created so that everyone can see all the activities and the pictures. The calendar takes up a 4 x 4 foot portion of the wall with each day taking up a six inch square. While some seniors help to make the hot soup, others make presentations and others still are making plans to design a cookbook filled with soup recipes and stories to be used as a fundraiser.

Strengths and assets are engaged for communal benefits

Opportunities are provided to encourage seniors to take leadership roles within the Neighbourhood House and within the seniors programs. The skills of the Advisory Committee are extensive to point that when the group identifies their training needs there is often one member of the group who not only has these skills but is also able to provide training to the others. Advisory group members and staff keep a mental list of all the skills that abound in the Drop. When the seniors indicate that they would like to incorporate a new initiative into the drop in they are often able to be led by a seniors. In the past this has included initiatives such as yoga, historical presentations, cooking, story sharing, knitting etc. As one strategy to ensure the advisory committee and the drop-in centre sustained, a volunteer training manual is being created by the advisory committee. The NH also supports the development of new skills by providing training opportunities with the agreement that the seniors bring back their learnings and share them with the NH. Currently the Seniors Advisory Committee members are taking Brain Gym training; when their training is over they will offer Brain Gym to the seniors and to the children in the NH childcare program. Another pair of seniors is attending a year long community development program at a local college. This has been funded by the NH. The senior students are using their new skills to expand the hot lunch program.

Strong partnerships with other groups and organizations

Strong partnerships are key to the ongoing operation of the Drop-In. Vancouver Coastal Health and local massage therapists make up our health and wellness team, offering information and referral, blood pressure testing and message therapy. The UBC school of music, our local high schools and our Neighbourhood House childcare and youth programs provide musical and theatrical entertainment. Local business makes regular donations of healthy nutritious food that the seniors use to prepare the hot lunch. The Fruit Tree project drops off fruit over the summer that the seniors turn into pies.

Conclusion

It is the energy and the enthusiasm of the seniors themselves that truly make this program operate day to day. They are resourceful and talented and able to use their skills to support other seniors, access program equipment and supplies and build new partnerships in the community. The NH house and community members and organizations provide space and staff support that provide an opportunity for the seniors to use their own abilities to become and to remain healthy active members of their community.

To implement this project, current approaches to seniors' services at three Neighbourhood Houses were researched and documented to capture the Neighbourhood House (NH) model and to identify some of the strengths and challenges for sustaining both the approach and the programs themselves. Consultation took place in three neighbourhoods with Neighbourhood House staff, participants, volunteers, seniors and project partners through one-on-one interviews, group discussions and meetings, a senior's survey and a review of materials provided by the Houses.

Components of this research included:

- Five coordinating meetings of the Executive Directors (EDs) of the participating Houses and the researcher/project coordinator in March, June, October, December and January to share information, ideas and build the report. ED meetings were an opportunity for co-learning and capacity building;
- Two meetings and discussions with the EDs, their staff, and the project partners - City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health and United Way - to present and discuss initial findings and to engage partners in the completion of the full report.
- One separate meeting of all management staff was held to share initial findings and gain insight and direction from the group as a whole;
- Two meetings with seniors' management staff and seniors' program staff were held at each Neighbourhood House to offer views into each House, as three different sets of informants were included;
- Thirty-eight visits to the Neighbourhood Houses' seniors programs provided an opportunity to observe programs, and an additional 23 visits to the Neighbourhood Houses and satellite offices were made for staff meetings and interviews, informal discussions with seniors participating in the programs. Visits to two of the Houses' off-site programs were also included (see Appendix A - list of programs);
- Input from 97 seniors was gathered through a written survey of their opinions about Neighbourhood House programming (see Appendix B);
- A review of materials including program schedules and descriptions from each House, City of Vancouver Scan of Seniors Services and Programs for the Seniors Services Partnership Initiative, program guides, newspaper articles, work plans, other research projects, advertising pamphlets, documentation of program awards, job descriptions, and program materials for classes.

Kitsilano Neighbourhood House



Kitsilano Neighbourhood House is situated in the busy Kitsilano area but serves a large geographical area encompassing West Point Grey, Dunbar-Southlands, Arbutus Ridge, Kerrisdale and Shaughnessy. As the only Neighbourhood House in this large urban area on Vancouver's west side, Kitsilano NH provides services to a population numbering over 105,000 people. These six neighbourhoods reflect a wide range of demographic groups from some of the highest

household incomes to many at or below the poverty level. About 20% of the residents are living in low income households. About 13% (over 15,000) of the population is 65 years and older. 60% of all residents speak English as their mother tongue and almost 16% identify themselves as speaking Chinese as their first language. Other languages significantly identified in the catchment area include German, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, Farsi, Taiwanese and Spanish.

Kiwassa Neighbourhood House



Covering East Vancouver neighbourhoods of North Hastings-Sunrise and Grandview-Woodlands, Kiwassa Neighbourhood House's surrounding population numbers over 61,000. This is a family-oriented and ethnically diverse area with 29% of the households identified as low income, higher than the Vancouver average. About 13% (8,300) of the population are 65 years and older.

English is identified as the mother tongue by 48% of the residents and Chinese by 28%. Italian, Vietnamese, Tagalog and Spanish are also spoken by significant numbers of people here. The area has a higher concentration of non-English speaking residents than the city as a whole.

South Vancouver Neighbourhood House



South Vancouver Neighbourhood House is situated in the heart of South East Vancouver. This area is comprised of three Vancouver neighbourhoods including Sunset, Victoria-Fraserview and Killarney with over 13,000 (15%) seniors represented in the population. At 91,600 residents in total in these areas, this is a higher percentage of seniors than in Vancouver in general. There are large pockets of low income and ethno-specific residents in some areas. Low income households comprise 25% of the households in this area.

Predominant non-English mother tongues are Chinese, at 35% of the population and Punjabi at more than 12% of the population. Tagalog, Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese are also represented in significant numbers.

Today's Neighbourhood Houses, also known as settlements or settlement houses, evolved from the settlement movement dating back to 1884 when the first settlement, Toynbee Hall, was created in London, England. The settlement's mission is rooted in a humanistic and communitarian philosophy aiming to equalize society while improving the day to day life for the poor (Yan, 2004). The settlement movement differentiated itself from other social reform movements by defining the community, rather than the individual, as the basic unit of society. Identifying the social, political and economic roots behind an individual's struggles, the settlements drew upon more radical political traditions, supporting the early trade union movement, advocating for abolition of child labour and fighting for laws to protect women and children (James, 2001).

The settlement philosophy and practice spread throughout Britain and to North America after Jane Addams visited Toynbee Hall. Addams and Ellen Gates Starr established Hull- House in Chicago in 1889. In 1902 the first Canadian settlement, Evangelia House based on the Hull-House model, was established in Toronto by American Sara Libby Carson. The settlement movement in Canada and the USA differed from that in England in that a primary focus was on integrating new immigrants into the community (James, 2001). Immigrants were viewed as having unique needs. Citizenship and language training were priorities identified for building a cohesive community that was divided both by class and by race.

The goals of the early settlement movement included: acting as a bridge between different social classes; researching social issues using participatory research methods; and developing innovative social programs to address issues (James, 2001). The connection between the classes was seen as essential to restore the fragmenting social fabric of the 19th century industrial cities (James, 2001). To facilitate the connections between classes, the settlement workers lived in the settlement house and befriended local residents as neighbours. The settlement workers encouraged

residents to register as members to give them a stake in the institution. Workers rejected the concept of 'client', referring to participants as 'members' to enhance their self-respect (Husock, 1993)

Members participated in group oriented services and education classes provided at the settlement. The group approach to services was used to build social bonds between people. Members were taught to undertake "bottom up", experiential research on poverty. Education was aimed at helping members become involved in changes that would improve their living and working conditions. The settlement workers promoted mutual aid and cooperative self-government organization based on the belief that reciprocity and practicing democracy was essential to preserve society (James, 2001; Yan, 2004).

Neighbourhood houses today have developed more elaborate service structures than those existing in the early settlements. Contemporary settlement workers no longer live in the settlement house and services are often funded by government sources. However, the neighbourhood houses' commitment to grounding services in a social justice philosophy and facilitating collective, locally-based responses to social issues is aligned with their 19th century settlement movement roots.

By Karen Larcombe

References

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James, C. (2001) Reforming Reform: Toronto's Settlement House Movement 1900-20. *The Canadian Historical Review*; Vol 82 no 1 p. 55-90.

Husock, H. (1993) Bringing Back the Settlement House: Settlements see Poor People as Citizens not clients. *Public Welfare*; Vol 51 No. 4 p.16-26.

Logic Model Appendix 4

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Immediate Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Long term Outcomes
Funding (cash and in-kind) Program Staff Volunteers NH Facilities	Education Programs to provide opportunities to advance life long learning	# Health related workshops # Computer instruction classes # ESL Instruction classes # Financial literacy classes # Seniors mentoring co-learning opportunities # Group out trips to other community resources # Income tax completion	Seniors gain information and skills needed for continued personal development and independent living	Seniors have the knowledge, skills and social connections they need for healthy aging Seniors feel respected for their unique skills, capacities and life experiences and are actively engaged in community participation Seniors' service needs are identified and addressed as part of a continuum of relationships and activities found in the NH setting Seniors have increased understanding of diversity and hold connections with seniors of diverse background and identities. Seniors groups and individual seniors have capacity for working together addressing social issues and service needs felt in the community.	All seniors are provided with the support and resources needed for healthy and productive life as part of their community
Management and administrative staff and processes	Health and Wellness promotion to strengthen physical well-being.	# Nutritious Meal programs # Physical Activity programs # Mental Wellness activities # Health information sessions # Health Screenings # Physical care programs	Seniors gain participation in activities needed for healthy aging and disease prevention		
Food/ program supplies Vehicles Community Service Partners	Group social experiences/entertainment promoting interactions and connectedness to avoid isolation and to cheer participants	# Arts and Crafts clubs # group games/pastimes # communal cooking sessions # Music appreciation events # Holiday celebrations # Birthday Celebrations # Entertainers Visits # Group Social outings	Seniors gain participation in enjoyable activities building friendships with seniors and others in community		
Faith groups Neighbourhood Businesses Neighbourhood residents	Volunteerism and Leadership Development enabling participants to use skills, be productive and fulfilled in addition to effecting change in their communities	# Seniors advisory committees # Volunteer skills training # Leadership workshops # Community Development skills training # Volunteer driven programs	Seniors gain meaningful community participation contributing their skills, knowledge and experiences as volunteers		
Neighbourhood features (parks)	Peer Support/ Community Connections building relationships with others to strengthen the individual, neighbourhood and community, allowing for early intervention as needed.	# 1-1 Peer Friendly visitors (in person/phone) # Community Events # Donations to other groups # Mutual support groups # Intergenerational programs	Seniors gain meaningful connections with others developing mutual support relationships		
	Social Services/ Supports to address needs as necessary, easing stress and assisting with unfamiliar tasks.	# Individual Advocacy # Translations of materials # Form filling # Information and Referral # 1-1 Counselling/emotional support # Adult Day Care Programs # Immigrant Settlement # 1-1 Accompaniment # Family respite # Daily living supports	Seniors receive non-stigmatizing services and information needed for meeting physical and emotional needs.		
	Outreach/inclusion/ advocacy growing connections and helping participants have a voice and stake in the community	# Outreach programs # Systems Advocacy # Civic participation projects # Intercultural promotion # Immigrant access # GLBT friendly	Seniors of all backgrounds gain participation in community programs and civic engagement activities		
	Service delivery Partnerships maximizing the number of services available to participants and sharing resources in a resource-limited environment.	# Partnerships with faith groups # Partnerships with health services # Partnerships with Education institutions # Partnerships with corporations # Partnerships with social service organizations	The partnership model leads to other opportunities which further develops service scope and breadth		

List of Funders

BC Housing
City of Vancouver
Fees for Service
Jewish War Memorial Veterans
Local businesses
New Horizons for Seniors
Province of British Columbia
RBC Financial Group
Seniors Fundraising Activities
Ministry of Advanced Education and
Labour Market Development
Immigrant Integration Branch
Share Award/Corporation
Solicitor General
United Way of the Lower Mainland
Vancouver Coastal Health
Vancouver Foundation

Resources

To learn more about the Neighbourhood House model as it relates to seniors programs, please visit our websites or contact our Houses by phone.

Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
• www.kitshouse.org
• (604) 736-3588

Kiwassa Neighbourhood House
• www.kiwassa.bc.ca
• (604) 254-7673

South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
• www.southvan.org
• (604) 324-6212





Input from:

Researcher: Leah
Pomerantz

***Kitsilano
Neighbourhood House***

Catherine Leach
Julie Wall
Claudine Claridge
Raewyn Tudor
Alejandra Lopez

***Kiwassa
Neighbourhood House***

Nancy McRitchie
Judy Smith
Eduardo Maggio
Valerie Offer
Pat Ho
Caroline Lo

***South Vancouver
Neighbourhood House***

Karen Larcombe
Kwangyoung Conn
Maggie Duckett
Janet Ji
Joan Wright
Julianna Csik
Sharon Tong
Preet Pandher
Wei-Wei Siew

City of Vancouver

Anne Kloppenborg
Michelle Vernooy

Vancouver Coastal Health

Lianne Carley

United Way of Greater Vancouver

Beverley Pittman