

Healthy  
Aging

by United Way



Better  
*at* Home

United Way helping seniors  
remain independent.

**Community Consultation & Stakeholder Meeting**

Princeton, BC

October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 via Zoom - 1:00 PM

## Overview:

*“Better at Home is a program that helps seniors with simple day-to-day tasks so that they can continue to live independently in their own homes and remain connected to their communities. The program is funded by the Government of British Columbia and managed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland, with services delivered by a local non-profit organization.”*

The **Princeton** region has been identified as potential **Better at Home** site. The United Way of Lower Mainland and United Way of Southern Interior assessed community readiness, identified seniors’ assets, needs and priorities in regard to the potential delivery of the **Better at Home** program.

This report reflects the Community Input and Stakeholder Meeting held on October 22, 2020 at 1:00 PM (via Zoom) and will be shared with invited guests and used by the lead organization to design an appropriate local **Better at Home** program that meets community needs.

The meeting attendees included members of the public and representatives from key stakeholders from the entire region. It was attended by 19 individuals including 3 representatives from the United Way Lower Mainland and 3 Better at Home Program Coordinators from the nearby regions. Further, 26 invitations were sent to stakeholders and key members of each location in preparation for the community meeting. Attendees were community members and representatives from various local organizations and businesses from the Princeton region and included key stakeholders and local government.

*The United Way Lower Mainland would like humbly acknowledge that we live, work and play as a guest on the beautiful, traditional, ancestral, and unceded lands of the Indigenous Peoples of this place we now call British Columbia. We honour the Elders for their stewardship of this place and peoples of these nations.*

## Facilitators:

**Kahir Lalji, M.A., CPG** – Provincial Director, Population Health, United Way Lower Mainland/ Executive Director, United Way Southern Interior

**Jessica Kleissen**, Regional Community Developer (RCD), Interior British Columbia, United Way Lower Mainland,

**Cathy Holmes**, Provincial Community Planner, Better at Home, United Way Lower Mainland

## Support Facilitators:

**Trazanna-Lee German** - Logan Lake Better at Home, Logan Lake WHY

**Brittany von Burg**, South Okanagan Better at Home, Desert Sun Counselling and Resource Centre

**Myrna Tischer**, **Better at Home** HUB Agency

Jessica Kleissen acknowledged territorial lands of the First Nations Communities and our use of their land for this meeting. After a bit of housekeeping and a formal welcome from Kahir Lalji, we welcomed participants. A short video highlighting the Better at Home Program was presented to the callers.

## Introduction to Healthy Aging by United Way

To better support older adults to be socially connected, live healthy lifestyles, and maintain independence, United Way's Healthy Aging strategy aims to help British Columbia's seniors stay at home and in their communities longer. Working towards a vision of a healthy, caring, inclusive community for all members. Healthy Aging by United Way embraces a holistic setting where older adults have unrestricted access to community programs and services so that they can age in place. Together with community agencies, local, provincial, and federal governments, and a diverse set of vested partners and donors, the Healthy Aging Team delivers programs including **Better at Home**, *Active Aging*, *Social Prescribing*, *Therapeutic Activation Programs for Seniors*, *Family Friends and Caregivers Support*, *Safe Seniors*, *Strong Communities* and Community and Sector Development initiatives, such as Healthy Aging CORE and Project Impact.

This work is based on three **Healthy Aging Pillars** – priorities that were identified through extensive research, community consultations and recommendations, and learnings uncovered through 12 Better at Home Communities of Practice (COPs) facilitated across the province:

*Increase physical activity:* Physical immobility and lack of leisure activity are related to social isolation and loneliness. One of the Healthy Aging Strategy goals is to increase physicality to help older adults remain socially connected and active as they age.

*Reduce social isolation:* The Healthy Aging Strategy aims to keep seniors mentally engaged in their communities, therefore reducing feelings of social isolation and social frailty.

*Maintain and enhance independence:* Through provincial investments that maintain and enhance seniors' independence, the Healthy Aging Strategy strengthens United Way's commitment to providing home and community services that encourage self-determination.

## Raising the Profile Project (RPP)

The RPP was launched in 2016, and was created to increase support and recognition of the role of community-based seniors' services in promoting health and fostering resilience in seniors in BC.

A significant component of the RPP was the development of a provincial network, the goal of which is to understand and build on the capacity of community-based seniors' services to meet the growing needs of an aging population. The network consists of executive directors and managers from municipal and non-profit organizations around BC, seniors who are volunteer leaders in the community-based senior services sector, as well as provincial organizations and others that support the work of the sector.

While **Better at Home** was not created from the RPP project the overall needs of individuals staying in their homes for longer periods of time revealed that complex needs arise as older adults age in place. In noting these changes, **Better at Home** has been able to support, educate and even influence many strategies in the sector.

## Healthy Aging CORE

Healthy Aging Collaborative On-line Resources and Education is a platform to connect community-based senior services organizations and allied agencies and individuals in British Columbia. CORE is designed to provide up-to-date information, resources, and training opportunities and to make it easier to communicate, coordinate, and collaborate in order to help build capacity, strengthen the network, and

develop a collective and cohesive voice among volunteers, staff, and others who support healthy aging initiatives.

The knowledge hub was created for Community Based Seniors' Services organizations and allied agencies and individuals in British Columbia. This portal features training, resources such as tool kits, guides, highlighted community programs, and CBSS Leadership Council's Provincial Working Groups discussion groups. **Better at Home** continues to be an integral part of the steering of the sector.

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

## **Community-Based Seniors Services sector (CBSS)**

The CBSS sector is broad and diverse bringing together key stakeholders, including seniors themselves from across the province in a central forum; Between April 2019 and July 2019, 12 regional consultations showcased Healthy Aging CORE, recommendations from the Provincial Summit on Aging, and guidance from the CBSS Leadership Council.

Community based organizations provide seniors with access to a range of low-barrier programs in seven core areas: 1) nutritional supports, 2) health and wellness programs, 3) physical activity, 4) education, recreation, and creative arts, 5) information, referral, and personal advocacy, 6) transportation, 7) affordable housing.

These programs and services are offered through a range of municipal and non-profit agencies including: senior centres; community centres; neighbourhood houses; community coalitions; ethnocultural organizations; and multi-service non-profit societies.

## **Better at Home Expansion Sites**

Over the past few years, there has been considerable interest in expanding the **Better at Home (BH)** program to more communities in BC. Based on a reviews of community population, data and needs assessments of prospective communities, in 2020, BH will expand to serve up to six (6) new program sites in British Columbia.

**Princeton** was identified as a potential **Better at Home** site.

The meeting on October 22, 2020, could not have happened without the dedication behind the scenes of the following people from:

**Princeton Family Services Society** – Jenny Pedwell, Executive Director

**Princeton & District Community Services** – Becky Vermette, Executive Director

All participants were thanked for their participation and support throughout the meeting.

### ***Attendees:***

**Spencer Coyne**, Mayor of Princeton

**Devirani Naidoo**, BCCRN Regional Mentor FVE

**Kym Baresinkoff**, Home Health IH Manager

**Nienke Klaver**, BC Rural Health Network

**Doreen Paulso**, Royal Canadian Legion Branch # 20

**Megan Courtney**, South Okanagan Similkameen Division of Family Practice

**Jenny Pedwell**, Princeton Family Services Society

**Wendy Weisner**, South Okanagan Volunteer Princeton

**Lisa Needoba**, Division of Family Practice

**Sharon Zieske**, RCMP, Community Outreach, Vermillion Court

**Becky Vermette**, Princeton & District Community Services Society

**Joy Klassen**, Princeton & District Community Services Society

**Denise**, Princeton & District Community Services Society

**Trazanna German**, Logan Lake Why Better at Home

**Brittany von Burg**, South Okanagan Better at Home

**Myrna Tisher**, Better at Home HUB, OneSky Community Services

**Jessica Kleissen**, Regional Community Developer, Interior BC, United Way Lower Mainland

**Kahir Lalji, M.A., CPG**, Provincial Director, Population Health, United Way Lower Mainland/ Executive Director, United Way Southern Interior

**The intent of the community meeting on October 22, 2020 was:**

- Support isolated areas as soon as possible in order to help support seniors in Princeton;
- That all seniors who need supports have access to bc211 and COVID19 emergency supports as well as **Better at Home** supports to community;
- Recommendation for **Better at Home** services in identified communities;
- Readiness in each community to pursue expansion in the region and determine community need and appetite which was confirmed by those in attendance.

The agenda for the meeting via Zoom was to come together as a community, through structured conversations, to identify senior's needs and priorities with regards to **Better at Home** services, as well as help identify a potential lead organization in the community best suited to deliver the Better at Home program.

**Community Assets Princeton**

A community asset is something that has value that is part of a community. Includes skills, networks, current initiatives, programs, policies, structures, or other resources that can be leveraged to improve the community's sustainability:

Princeton Royal Canadian Legion

Senior Citizens Branch 20

Interior Health / Home and Community Care

Volunteer's in Princeton

RCMP/Community Outreach Program

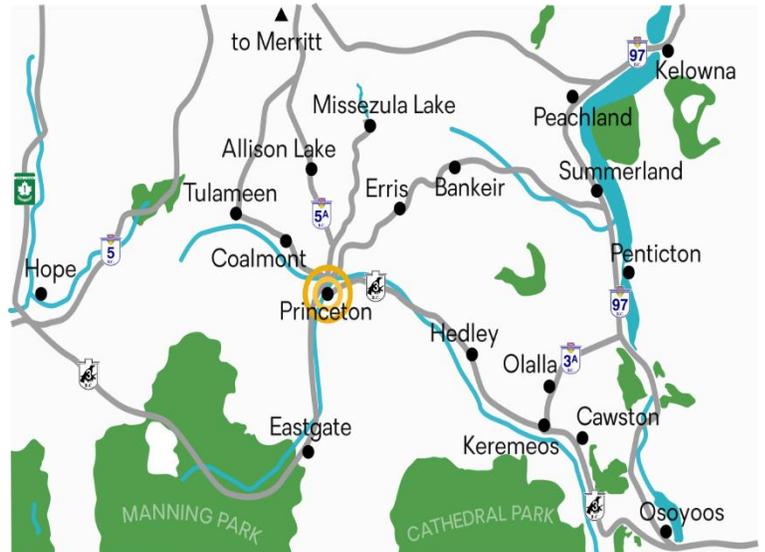
Princeton Food Bank (Princeton Baptist Church)

Rotary Club

BCCRN

Division of Family Practice

Lower Similkameen Community Services Society



Upper Nicola, Spuzzum First Nation, Upper Similkameen, Okanagan Indian Band, Nlaka'pamux Peoples and Okanagan and Nlaka'pamux Nations

- According to the 2016 Census, the population of Princeton **2828**. and including the surrounding area is **5064**
- **750** persons are 65 years and older (Princeton City Limits)
- **170** are over the age of 85
- Total in region over the age of 65 – **1595**
- **270** over the age of 85
- In 2016, **1065** seniors over the age of 65 (**21.3%**) lived independently in their own homes
- **24%** lived below the poverty line in the region
- Average Cost of a home range on average **\$399,000 - \$455,000**

## Regional Considerations

Housing – Housing in the region is limited and many of the homes in the region are pre 1960's. Those wishing to downsize find limited suitable accommodation as many of the apartment costs are beyond the means of low-income seniors.

Currently, changes are occurring at Vermillion Court which may affect the resident services including meal supports and hospitality services.

The BCCRN regional mentor noted that there was no branch in this community, but encouraged the creation of the CRN to support older adults in the region.

## What does Better at Home do?

The Better at Home program helps seniors live in their own homes by providing nonmedical support services delivered by local lead organizations, which may be a non-profit organization; using a mix of paid workers, private contractors and volunteers. Better at Home programs are guided by local Advisory Committees and each program will have a paid Program Coordinator. In our 7<sup>th</sup> year of service delivery, we are thrilled to continue supporting existing programs, and welcome new ones, as they ensure that seniors live well, remain independent, and are active contributors to their communities.

The Better at Home program is designed to address the specific needs of local regions, allowing communities to choose from the following basket of services:

- friendly visiting
- transportation to appointments
- snow shoveling
- light yard work
- simple home repairs
- grocery shopping
- light housekeeping

## Presentation and Reflections - *What are the needs of Seniors in the Princeton Region?*

### Princeton Family Services Society

**Princeton Family Services Society** prepared a presentation outlining the many supports that their agency provides to the community. The presentation was facilitated by **Executive Director, Jenny Pedwell**.

**Princeton Family Services Society** Princeton Family Services Society is a non-profit organization, incorporated in 1977. We have been providing services to the children and families in our community for 43 years. The Society contracts through various ministries and agencies.

**Princeton Family Services Society** works to support children and families in the community to reach their fullest potential and greatest level of independence.

They offer the following programs:

- PEACE (Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment)
- Stopping the Violence (STV)
- Cindy Paroline Safe Homes
- Family Place (CAP-C)
- Infant Development Program
- Family Supports

- Community Outreach Program
- Nobody's Perfect (ages 0-6)
- Parents Supporting Parents (ages 7+)
- Women Supporting Women
- Boys and Girls Club

Community Outreach is an important part of Princeton Family Services.

- Clients are tasked to the worker from the doctors
- Notes are attached to the task as to what the need is
- Needs are everything from friendly visits, housing, transportation to appointments, help with grocery shopping, completing forms such as applications to Income Assistance, SAFER, EI, etc
- Clients are generally from 19 years old and up
- High percentage of clients are 60+ years

• 20 to 24 years	115
• 25 to 29 years	165
• 30 to 34 years	140
• 35 to 39 years	120
• 40 to 44 years	140
• 45 to 49 years	155
• 50 to 54 years	220
• 55 to 59 years	265

• 60 to 64 years	225
• 65 to 69 years	225
• 70 to 74 years	175
• 75 to 79 years	155
• 80 to 84 years	95
• 85 to 89 years	55
• 90 to 94 years	30
• 95 to 99 years	5

Barriers for seniors in Princeton include: Housing, Transportation, COVID 19 Relationship/Loneliness, Assisted Living and Grocery Shopping.

**Princeton Family Services** will work closely with community to ensure seniors receive the supports they need.

## **Princeton & District Community Society**

**Princeton & District Community Services** prepared a verbal presentation outlining the many supports that their agency provides to the community. The presentation was facilitated by **Executive Director, Becky Vermette**.

**Princeton & District Community Services** – *Mission – is to promote, develop, and coordinate comprehensive integrated community-based services, vocational opportunities, affordable housing options and support the disabled, vulnerable, elderly population.*

They are funded by 5 provincial sources and include the following community supports:

Interior Health, Home Support  
CLBS – Adults with Disabilities  
New Beginnings Day program  
Low income and Seniors Housing BC Housing  
Community Policing and Victims Services  
Community Outreach and Residential Services

Operates **BC Transit Princeton** door to door service within Princeton is available Monday, Wednesday & Friday; simply call Princeton & District Community Services at 250-295-6666. Scheduled service to Penticton via Keremeos is available Monday, Wednesday and Fridays with the bus leaving Princeton at 7:15 a.m. (Chevron) and leaving Penticton at 12:50 p.m. (Walmart)

PDCSS would like to show those isolated that they are being thought of and supported by their community. By providing care packages on a regular basis, we hope to open lines of communication with those who are stuck at home and to provide them with essential and comfort items to help make their isolation period more tolerable.

The agency has operated for 45 years, and have a strong knowledge of the seniors in the community and the needs of the community.

The agency sees the need for **Better at Home** Services in the community and first and foremost would, from the basket of services, offer as needs priority Housekeeping, Transportation, (currently offering the bus services but recognizes that it isn't an ideal service currently as the bus schedule often doesn't work to accommodate the needs of the senior.) social checks preventing isolation and shopping services.

Becky also noted that **Better at Home** would be a way of engaging volunteers to support older adults in the community. They see a lot of benefit in matching volunteers with community and seniors in particular. Their current volunteer engagement is around their Board and a couple who are working in the day program. *"It is often human interaction that makes the seniors thrive "*

Since the pandemic began, PDCSS has seen an influx of calls from seniors looking for additional assistance and who are not current clients of their home support program. Requests have included social visits, groceries and light housekeeping. Although the agency has been accommodating, they have been doing so without the adequate resources. Some of the calls are for home support but some of the callers can't afford the per diem amount and require only minor supports to stay in their home.

**Denise, Seniors Services at PSCSS** relayed a story about a gentleman who traditionally received Meals on Wheels, a program that was recently cut due to funding, who had fallen between two buildings as he'd gone out to get or chop some wood. He had been wearing rubber boots and was partially blind suffering with glaucoma. Home support, who had been engaged to deliver the meals, placed the food on the table and noted he was not in the home. The man's voice was barely heard, but the home support worker managed to hear him, cover him, call 911 and in the end his life was saved. Without that check-in, he would most probably have died.

Many people would like to volunteer, but the current process is a bit lengthy and the agency would like to streamline it. Structure and funding would be “huge” in helping the community utilize these volunteers.

They are currently working on a grant proposal for BC Housing to open an independent living facility for seniors in the community.

## Feedback from Meeting Participants

- There is a high density of isolated seniors in the surrounding district.
- As of December 15<sup>th</sup> 2020, Vermillion Court a seniors housing complex will no longer be offering hospitality services. This includes meal preparation, housekeeping and 24/7 security. They are confident they will be able to turn this around, and are in negotiation with BC Housing and Interior Health to determine what they will be able to continue offering. There are 18 units/ 16 residents in this facility – the kitchen was in Vermillion Court for Meals on Wheels. This contract is also under review.
- Contracted cleaners in the community are generalized. Interior health does vet some people and they have 4 contractors they refer.
- There are a number of low-income seniors that are not accounted for under Stats Canada’s 2016 report and many seniors are unable to find appropriate services in Princeton.
- During COVID-19 there is a concern regarding providing traditional **Better at Home** services.
- Princeton has a very engaged support team through their community seniors’ programs and initiatives. Both organizations have access to volunteers that could support elements of the **Better at Home** Program but currently have very few volunteers engaged.
- Foundational funding would help support existing programming for seniors and would allow expansion serving seniors not currently connected to medical supports.
- While Princeton may have services in community, services to support seniors to age in place are limited.
- There are some meal delivery options in the community that could help during COVID-19 if engaged. These programs are private businesses and worth considering moving forward.
- Seniors needs have brought the COVID-19 gaps to light. Many veterans feel committed to their social activities, and the trauma involved with COVID-19 has become more apparent. The pandemic has really changed the way seniors participate in community. *“When you are at home, at least you can have friends over visiting and Princeton could really use someone to help coordinate it and work with seniors in a safe and trusted manner.”*
- Community meeting places where people can social distance are limited. Social distancing is more difficult in the winter.
- *“Zoom and technology is new for seniors and people need some room to move. The legion has been able to help a bit, and the hospital auxiliary has also helped. Facilities and opportunities in community are limited but there has been work with the town.”*
- Suggestions from seniors include: *Riverside Community Center may be utilized. There are costs, but they have been able to get the town’s support. The library board room is also great, as is the old United Church*

*to potentially host some meetings. Costs involved have been an impediment. Proposals are being written with community spaces in mind.*

- Rural communities would benefit from **Better at Home**; they had applied years ago and are very pleased that it will be coming to the region. Volunteers may be a concern – Are there enough who can support the program?
- The Town of Princeton has been very helpful when it comes to space and the town will continue to support and make it available at the best rate possible.
- *“Both organizations do so many great things for community – the program is definitely needed in the region. The need is strong at Vermillion, but there are ways to create a Made in Princeton fit.”*
- Home and community care, and Community Health feel that affordable housekeeping is so important; transportation to medical appointments, mail, errands, grocery shopping, social interaction and snow shoveling are all needed. Ice and mobilization of seniors are of concern.
- CRN is not currently in the community, but the community mentor is available to create a coordinated community response network to assist with seniors who are subject of abuse. Partnerships with **Better at Home** have been invaluable in supporting information about financial abuse, abuse in the home, and encourage the community to work with the regional mentor and establish a CRN in Princeton.
- There is significant need for this program in Princeton.

**Better at Home** would be a welcome addition to current community supports and both agencies would work well together.

Both agencies acknowledged the expertise of their colleagues and their community knowledge regarding each of their agencies and support the collaborative opportunity ahead.

### ***What are some important criteria for a lead organization in community?***

- Connection to service groups in all communities in the Princeton Region
- Track Record for managing Grants and sourcing alternative funding to support programs
- The ability to distribute resources
- Able to manage the demands and expectations of the clients
- Ability to gather In Kind supports
- Have people “on the ground” in the region
- Possess long term sustainability
- Have the capacity and foresight for growth
- Promote Success
- Long standing in the community
- Cooperative and Collaborative
- Evolve and fluid

**Prevention oriented:** Better at Home programs are built on the primary assumption that preservation of independence, dignity and health, and the delay of functional decline are worthwhile investments.

**Seniors planning for and with seniors.** Seniors are engaged in the planning and governance of the local programs.

**Senior centered.** The local programs are designed to respond to the needs, priorities and changing circumstances of seniors.

**Community driven:** Within the Better at Home framework, local programs are built by the community for the community and will involve coordination of services from various organizations and partners.

**Evidence informed:** Local programs are built on the learning and evidence developed through the CASI evaluation, through ongoing monitoring, evaluation and learning, and on the desire to seek continuous improvements through additional learning and research.

**Independence focused:** Better at Home fosters self-sufficiency and independence by: offering services that assist clients to live independently; helping to promote health literacy and support self-care; promoting social inclusion, and; enabling community connectedness.

**Simple and understandable:** Services incorporate clear and accessible information, ease of access, and the least amount of official procedure needed to maintain standards of safety, privacy and quality.

**Based on need:** Local programs respond to seniors' needs for service and ability to contribute to the cost of providing those services.

**Integrated:** Local programs are developed in partnership with seniors and other key stakeholders and will be integrated where feasible and, by design, complementary to other services and supports.

**A non-governmental program:** Better at Home is managed by UWLM and identified as a non-profit sector program funded by government, which does not replace existing governmental programs or services.

## **Better at Home Program Highlights:**

**Better at Home** is a program that helps seniors with simple day-to-day tasks so that they can continue to live independently in their own homes and remain connected to their communities. The Government of British Columbia funds the program, United Way of the Lower Mainland manages it, and local non-profit organizations provide the services.

Its unique 'seniors planning for seniors' approach means older adults contribute to the design, operation and evaluation of their local program.

Older adults who receive Better at Home services may pay a fee based on their income. Some services may be free. These fees-for-service are fed back into the local program in order to serve more seniors.

Although each program is unique and serves based on the community, there are also commonalities among 75 Better at Home programs:

- Service fees are established on an income-based sliding scale which ensures that services are free for low income seniors, and market rate for seniors with an income above the BC average.
- All volunteers providing services directly to seniors must have a criminal record check.
- Programs submit regular reports to the provincial office to monitor performance and progress.
  
- Program Coordinators engage in a Community of Practice which includes sharing, learning activities, discussing best practices on an online portal, and meet annually for training

opportunities and participation in collective dialogue. These activities help develop the capacity of each local program to best serve and support the older adults in BC. Better at Home Across the Province.

**From April 2019 – March 2020**  
**Service Distribution**

 **13 %**  
Transportation

 **47 %**  
Light Housekeeping

 **16 %**  
Friendly  
Visiting

 **2 %**  
Snow  
Shoveling

 **4 %**  
Light Yard  
Work

 **6 %**  
Grocery  
Shopping

 **12 %**  
Other  
Services

 **0 %**  
Minor Home  
Repairs

**From April 2019 – March 2020**

**11,935** Active Participants

**3,832** New Program Participants

**38%** of all services were delivered by Volunteers

\*69 out of 70 programs reporting

## Better at Home Interior of British Columbia



- **\$2.7 Million Dollars** invested
- **19 BH** programs and **14 HA** Programs
- **2,233** seniors received at least one service
- **770** new seniors enrolled
- **1712** are female
- **1566** live alone
- **621** are 85+
- **393** volunteers provided services

*\*Data provided is based on BH programs 2018-2019 reporting.*

### **Better at Interior BC**

**Better at Home** programs have been established in the Interior of BC since 2012 initially under the CASI project.

Currently, **Better at Home** in the Interior can be found in: Arrow Lakes, Ashcroft/Cache Creek, Boundary, Castlegar, Central Okanagan, Columbia Valley, Cranbrook, Creston Valley, Kamloops, Logan Lake, Lower Columbia, North Thompson, Peachland, Penticton, Shuswap, Southern Okanagan, and Williams Lake.

While there are 19 formal programs, there are several smaller communities served in the region. Some follow a regional model and cover more than one community with communications and supports which work together to support seniors who may reside in remote areas that have few services. Throughout the Interior, several First Nations communities both on and off reserve receive services. Close relationships with First Nations Health Authorities have proven invaluable. The **Better at Home** programs listed will be of tremendous support moving forward and can provide advice on program development.

Learning, reflective practice, and knowledge-sharing are central to **Better at Home**, particularly to support program development and quality improvement. Together these programs participate in on two **Community of Practice** (COP) sessions formally meet two to three times per year serving all Interior Regions of British Columbia; however, with COVID-19 they meet more regularly as the needs of community change and evolve. Host organizations also connect via the **Better at Home HUB** (found on CORE). Several times per year agencies come together for learning opportunities and to support each other's program growth or to consult on best practices as program challenges occasionally arise. **Better at Home** Programs are constantly evolving and pivoting to meet the needs of the community.

Regional models defined include:

**Type 1:**

- 1 Host Umbrella + formal agreements with 2 or more Community Based Senior Services (CBSS) agencies in different communities served.
- This may be determined by population size and distance factors, differences in services from basket desired by differing communities

**Type 2:**

- 1 Host, employs several coordinators in different communities.

**Type 3:**

- 1 Host Agency, 1 Coordinator responsible for a large geographic region with distinct communities with different local governments - We currently have many BH Programs of this type.

Because the program is established using a *community development approach* each program is unique to the communities it serves. **Each program must meet the basic grant criteria** and beyond that can offer some or all of the services from the basket using a mix of paid staff, contractors, and volunteers.

To get a feel for the scope of the work **Better at Home** Program Coordinators are invited to present a brief synopsis of how the program operates in their unique community and to highlight some of the wisdom learned through delivering services in their area.

Our Guest **Better at Home** speakers offered the following insight:

**Trazanna-Lee German - Logan Lake Better at Home, Logan Lake WHY**

Noted that each region is different and it is important to figure out that what may work in a larger region, may not work the same way in a smaller region

Reminded the group that **Better at Home** has been a great addition to the services available for older adults in the Province overall

Commented on the transition and service delivery in the region and the flexibility of the program.

Discussed housekeeping, as staff, vs contractors. Allowing to adhere to agency standards, noting flexible subsidy levels.

In partnership with Vision Quest Discovery Society, they were able to support the fulfilling volunteer hours and give back to their community. They offer a fee by donation model for lawn mowing (\$5 for ½ hour and \$ 10.00 for an hour) to subsidise this service.

In winter, a modest charge of \$25 for snow shoveling for the season is delivered by volunteers from Vision Quest Discovery Society.

During COVID-19 it was noted that seniors needed grocery shopping and so they began to offer this service. Participants can order all week, and their team does the shop and delivers to the participants on Wednesdays every week.

They collaborate with many organizations in the community including working with Hospice and the BCCRN.

They offer a two-fold friendly visitor program – *Drive Me* – combining errands with visits for seniors.

Partnerships with Hospice also include collaborative training particularly around listening to help volunteers identify potential concerns of seniors

### **Brittany von Burg, South Okanagan, Desert Sun Counselling and Resource Centre**

South Okanagan, Desert Sun has held the program since 2014.

One of the highlights of the **BH Program** is that organizations can try new things, re-evaluate, and then try again to find a new flow if needed.

As they support several communities, they try to match each community with seniors and housekeepers so it is long lasting.

Currently their main services are housekeeping and transportation. Many of their participants need to go to medical appointments that are located in major centers sometimes up to 45 minutes or more from their home community.

Desert Sun offers a connected and caring program adapting to the needs of the older adults and pivot as they remain current to the ever-changing climate of COVID-19.

Due to COVID-19 services were suspended in March and started up again in July. They have been following the protocol and precautions as directed by the Province of BC.

## Emergency Response

### Safe Seniors Strong Communities (SSSC) COVID-19 Response

#### Emergency COVID-19 Response Plan in partnership with United Way and bc211 Funded by the Ministry of Health

- Easy access to services through bc211, now province-wide
  - Seniors connected to local community volunteers, friends, neighbors
  - Added supports and expanded services specific to COVID-19 needs
  - Expansion of United Way's Better at Home Services
  - Funding of community agencies and programs through United Way
- As of October 20th, 2020 over 370,139 - SSSC services have been provided to Seniors in British Columbia

#### Seniors (65+) **No cost for Service Delivery**

Living in community

Urgent non-medical needs resulting from COVID-19

Living independently without publicly funded services and/or have no other way to get support services

Wellness checks /Virtual Friendly Visits

Grocery shopping/delivery

Meal prep (pre-made drop-offs and support in home)

Prescription pick-up/drop-off

## Better at Home - Identifying a Lead Organization

We have designed a different approach to the selection of the Lead Organization for delivering the **Better at Home** program. Instead of a competitive process where the funder selects which agency will receive the grant, each community will go through a community engagement process. In this process, stakeholders – seniors in particular – have a chance to shape the program according to local needs and help select the Lead Organization that is the best fit with the program they envision.

This approach encourages partnerships and collaboration, results in better service delivery for the seniors, and empowers communities to make their own decisions.

In order to qualify to hold the **Better at Home** program, the lead organization must:

1. Be a non-profit, charitable organization,
2. Employ a program coordinator,
3. Complete a BH application form, including the following:
  - a. Governance structures, financial statements
  - b. A description of geographical boundaries for service delivery
  - c. A list of Better at Home services that your program will offer

4. Provide two (2) completed budgets;
  - ✦ UWLM Program Funds budget,
  - ✦ and a Total Program Funds budget.
5. Provide any other documentation considered key by the community or by UWLM to support approval of the implementation plan and application.

### BH Program Must Meet the Following Grant Criteria

- Participants should be older residents, sometimes defined as 60 or 65 years of age or over
- Participants served must be residents of the identified service area
- A paid program coordinator
- The organization that receives and is accountable for the funds must be a non-profit and charitable organization.
- Provide in-kind support and seek additional funding as needed e.g., donated office space, equipment)
- The program must comply with evaluation requirements (data collection, reporting, participation in Community of Practice).
- That a *Better at Home Advisory Committee* be established to support, guide, and to help the integration of the program into community and be responsive to seniors for the first two years.
- Establish strategies to maximize reach / impact of the program, volunteers, and in-kind support.
- Undertake outreach, marketing and public awareness to reach older adults.
- Provide Volunteer training and support.

### Better at Home Implementation Process



### Suggested Timeline for Implementation of Proposed for Princeton

An ideal timeline was suggested for the **Princeton BH** program be:

- Late October a Lead Organization be identified for Princeton

- Early November, 2020 the Lead organizations to fulfill and meet all application and grant criteria
- A signed Letter of Agreement for dispersal of funds be for early November 2020
- A Program Coordinator be employed in time to participate in the Provincial Better at Home Communities online COP's by December 2020
- At least one BH service be delivered to seniors no later than February 1, 2021.

The UWLM team shared their experiences with the presenters and tried to affirm concerns by sharing the current dynamics of the program throughout the Province reflecting the needs of community, particularly during COVID-19 and the current landscape of successful BH Programs.

## Recommendations from Provincial Community Planner, Better at Home

After careful deliberation and conversations with key stakeholders, community, colleagues from the United Way of Lower Mainland, the Regional Community Developer Interior BC, seniors who reside in Princeton and the data available, the recommendation is to proceed with the application processes for **Princeton & District Community Services – Becky Vermette, Executive Director**.

Both agencies are well equipped, ready to support the initiative and are able to carry out the deliverables for the **Better at Home** program goals. **Princeton & District Community Services** has the infrastructure to carry out the goals of the program as many of their programs are already senior based and can be leveraged to meet the needs of the community.

## Why Princeton & District Community Services

- Solid non-profit with strong ties to the community
- History of community engagement and consultation
- Committed Board Members with a wide range of relevant experience
- Membership reflects the region's communities
- Extensive community engagement in defining regional requirements and solutions
- Providing significant input to evolving needs of seniors and close relationships with health authorities
- Committed to sustainable and secure operating policies
- History of accountability in reporting to funders
- Accomplished fundraisers and program developers
- Independent Board that represents the community
- Support from all corners of the region
- Strong and growing network of contacts locally and beyond
- Significant track record of service to the community

## Next Steps

Considerable support for **Princeton & District Community Services** as the lead host agency was supported by participants in attendance. Support for a community partnership with Princeton Family Services Society was also clearly identified including those from local stakeholders, seniors and attendees from the community consultation.

All members of the call were *“looking forward to the implementation of the program in the area because the services are desperately needed.”* The population of Princeton is large and spread out with a number of communities close by including Coalmont and Tulemeen which will be served through the catchment of Princeton BH Program.

Findings of this report will be reviewed and discussed and an application will be sent to the successful host agency candidate.

The Provincial Community Planner and the Regional Community Developer will work with the perspective agency to support the application process. Once the LOA has been approved and is in place our team will work with the agency to train, support and facilitate a successful launch of the **Better at Home** program in the community.

## Thank you!

The day would not have been possible without the support of everyone who assisted in putting the meeting together. From the Zoom meeting itself to the information gathering, this dialogue was created by the community of Princeton and we are grateful for the opportunity to bring the **Better at Home Program** in your region.

Thank you **Kahir Lalji**, Provincial Director, Population Health for your vision and encouragement to expand **Better at Home** to more communities in the Province of BC through meaningful initiatives for older adults in our communities.

Many thanks to **Jessica Kleissen**, RCD Interior BC, United Way Lower Mainland for her co-facilitation and insight into the region. Special thanks to the team of **Healthy Aging by United Way, Population Health UWLM** including, **Bobbi Symes**, Assistant Director, Population Health, **Jean Rikhof**, Administrative Assistant, Population Health, **Camille J Hannah**, Provincial Coordinator, Population Health, **Isaac Shr**, Provincial Coordinator, Grants & Data, and everyone on the Healthy Aging team who assists in the facilitation of new programs in the Province of British Columbia.

Finally, thanks to each of you for attending the day with the desire to co-create a shared future that invests in our older adults to live independently in their own homes and remain connected to their communities. Thanks also for demonstrating humility, courage, grace and leadership to explore differences and uncover what could be the greatest asset and outcome of the session; in particular trusting the facilitation process and being supportive of working with complex challenges presented in our communities.

We look forward to the next steps.

Further feedback, comments or questions can be directed to:

**Cathy Holmes**

**Provincial Community Planner, Better at Home Population**

**Health Team - UWLM**

**[cathyh@uwlm.ca](mailto:cathyh@uwlm.ca)**

**250 797-9378**