

Healthy Aging

by United Way



Better *at* Home

United Way helping seniors
remain independent.

Community Consultation & Stakeholder Meeting
August 28th, 2019 in Grand Forks, B.C.

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 Boundary region, including the communities of Christina Lake, Grand Forks, Greenwood, Midway, Rock Creek, Westbridge, Christian Valley, Beaverdell have been identified as a potential Better at Home site. The United Way of the Lower Mainland 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 August 28, 2019 in Grand Forks, B.C. 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 was held in Grand Forks inviting the public and representatives from key stakeholders from the entire region which was attended by approximately 25 individuals. Attendees included community members and representatives from various local and provincial governments, community organizations and businesses in the Boundary region.

Facilitators:

Jessica Kleissen, Regional Community Developer, Interior, United Way of the Lower Mainland

The day began with a beautiful prayer and song and circle invitation by Judy Letende.

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, 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.

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.

[**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; ethno-cultural 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 2019, BH will expand to serve six (6) new program sites in British Columbia.

The Boundary region, including the communities of Christina Lake, Grand Forks, Greenwood, Midway, Rock Creek, Westbridge, Christian Valley, Carmi, Beaverdell have been identified as a potential Better at Home site. .

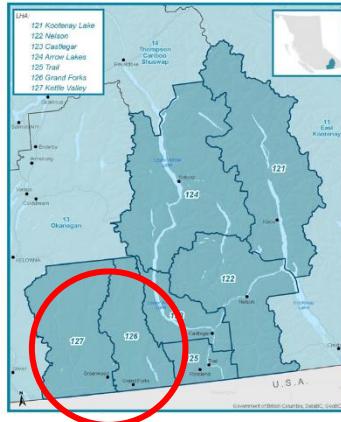
Working with local community members, three potential lead organizations were identified as possibility being interested in holding the Better at Home program:

- Boundary Women's Coalition
- Boundary Family Services
- Boundary Community Hospice Association

The agenda for the August 28th meeting 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 who is best suited to deliver the Better at Home program.

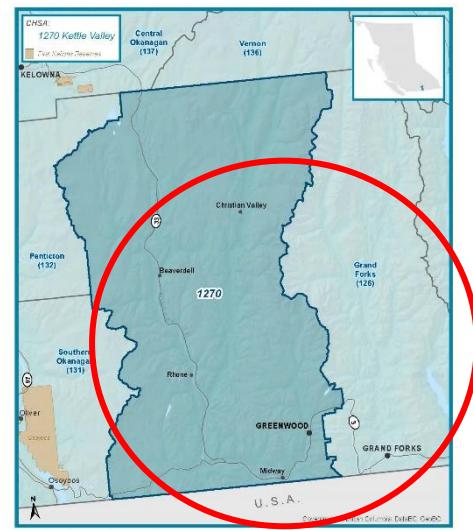
Profile of Boundary:

- The Boundary area includes Big White, Beaverdell, Westbridge, Christian Valley, Rock Creek, Midway, Greenwood, Grand Forks, and Christina Lake.
- The region attracts families and retirees, with a strong commitment to healthy living, affordability and quality of life.
- The community is between the pristine waters of the Granby and Kettle Rivers and is nestled in a unique east/west running valley.
- Severe flooding in 2017 & 2018 and in years prior has made a lasting impact on this city.
- Currently the region is dealing with major re-planning and land acquisition to avoid future flood damage and protect its residents.
- Incorporated in 1897, Grand Forks is the hub of the Boundary region, located between the Okanagan Valley and the Kootenays.
- The area's major employers are School District #51, Roxul, Interior Health, Interfor and a number of nurseries.
- Grand Forks is only a couple of hours drive from 2 major centres, Spokane, Washington USA and Kelowna.
- The closest regional airport is a 1 hour drive to Castlegar or a 2 hour drive to Kelowna's international airport.



Geographic Area of the region:

- 104 Km between Christina Lake and Rock Creek - Includes Grand Forks, Greenwood, Midway
- 57 km between Carmi to Rock Creek
- The vast region presents Better at Home service delivery challenges; intake of clients, sourcing volunteers and contractors, transportation costs



Boundary Community Data:

- Average age of population 50.4
- Low income seniors 17.3%
- Median age at death 84
- 25.65% seniors in 75+ age group are primary home maintainers
- No growth increase is expected for the general population of this area, however there is an anticipated increase in senior population 2017-2022 (IHA info):

+11% for 65+

+22% for 75+

+22% for 85+

- Community members challenged the Stats Can data as stating lower numbers than in actuality.
- Local government representatives shared Vital Signs data and thanked Phoenix Foundation for its leadership on Vital Signs survey.

Health Services Area	Profile Year	Total Population	#65+	%65+	#85-90+	%85+
Grand Forks	2017	7901	2641	274	33	3
Kettle Valley	2017	3049	1073	78	35	3

2016 Census	%Low-income Seniors		
	Male	Female	Total
<u>Grand Forks</u>	7.44	6.25	6.73
<u>Christina Lake</u>	7.40	7.60	6.82
<u>Midway</u>	6.75	6.00	6.38
<u>Greenwood</u>	4.83	3.29	3.71
<u>Rock Creek</u>	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total/Avg	6.97	5.98	6.41

2016 Census	#Primary Home Maintainers		
	65-74	75-84	85+
<u>Grand Forks</u>	405	250	95
<u>Christina Lake</u>	100	90	20
<u>Midway</u>	120	65	10
<u>Greenwood</u>	135	35	10
<u>Rock Creek</u>	35	0	0
Total/Avg	795	440	135

Assets in The Lower Columbia Region:

A community asset, or community resource, is anything that can be used to improve the quality of community life. Includes networks, people, current initiatives, programs, services, policies, structures, or other resources that can be leveraged to improve the community's sustainability.

- Local Government – Mayors, Council, Regional District Directors, MLAs and MPs
- Municipal Age Friendly committees
- Indigenous and Metis associations, Boundary All Nation Advisory Council

- Phoenix Community Foundation
- Interior Health programs and services, Divisions of Family Practice, Pathways, Primary Care Network
- Community-based Senior Services, health and wellness community partners and non-profits offering programs: Boundary Family Services, Boundary Women's Coalition, Sunshine Valley Community Services, Boundary Hospice, Food Bank, Food Share Rock Creek, West Boundary Seniors Housing Society, Boundary Food Coalition, Red Cross, Grand Forks & Christina Lake Health Care Auxiliary, Beaverdell Community Centre, Rock Creek Medical Centre, Boundary Health Cooperative, Community Futures, Women's Institute, Community Gardens, Blessing Boutique
- Nearby Better at Home programs; Castlegar, Arrow Lake, Nelson, Creston,
- Seniors organizations and associations in the region providing social activities
- Community Paramedics, Poverty Advocate, Seniors Advocate,
- Faith and Service groups like Elks, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Legion, Rotary, Lions

What does Better at Home do?

The Better at Home program helps seniors live in their own homes by providing simple nonmedical support services delivered by local Lead Organization, a non-profit organization using a mix of paid workers and volunteers. Better at Home programs are guided by Local Advisory Committees and each program will have a paid coordinator. As stated above the program is funded by the Government of British Columbia and managed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland (UWLM).

In our 7th 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 seniors, 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

Group Reflections - *What are the needs of Seniors in this community?*

The rest of the morning provided for small group reflections. Three groups were given 45 minutes to discuss their thoughts on the needs of older adults in the Boundary communities. The following are highlights that were reported back to room table by table.

1. *What non-medical home support services from the Better at Home basket of services are the top priorities in our community?*

The TOP suggested Better at Home services:

- 1) Transportation,
- 2) Snow Shoveling, and
- 3) Yard Work, like lawnmowing, followed by
- 4) Housekeeping,
- 5) Grocery Shopping and
- 6) Pet Care
- 7) Friendly Visiting
- 8) Home Repair & Other

The following are comments that were shared by the three tables:

- Connecting with families is also very important. There is a huge need for communication with families who aren't in area – friendly visitor program could do this or call the family.
- Social Isolation is a huge concern and there needs to be activities to address this as well as language supports because there are many different languages spoken in the area.
 - Social Isolation is a disability.
 - Social isolation became very apparent after the Fire, the floods. There are also a number of older adults who reside 'off the grid' intentionally or do not 'choose' isolation.
 - Wellness checks and friendly visiting would reduce social isolation.
- There must be a balance of services delivered between the east and west areas of the Boundary region.
 - The Boundary program should consider offering services differently depending on community.
 - Transportation needs and availability are different in the east and west areas of the region.
 - Fairness in delivering services to different communities in the region is key.

- Minor Home repairs would resolve some safety issues. IH Home Care may not attend some clients due to hazards. Better at Home could take care of these minor repairs or shovel snow in winter.
- Entire basket should be offered with key additions that could fall under 'Other' such as:
 - Adapting home environments,
 - Garbage & recycling to curb. This could be considered Housekeeping
 - information and referrals. Legal services
 - Call Pat Vermiere, Constituency Assistant to Linda Larsen, MLA
 - Food preparation. This will not be a Better at Home service for safety and liability reasons.
 - Pet Care is a service that is needed.
- Support for caregivers is a huge need in the area.
- Seniors to support each other, active seniors participating in program as providers, perhaps this could be a supplemental income for some seniors. As an example, Castlegar Better at Home has 2 seniors who are volunteer Friendly Visitors and are gifted mileage compensation.
- There should be a Toll Free Phone number for Better At Home services.
- Volunteers could be sourced from Shannon Wolf – Band Teacher at GF Secondary, Hockey Clubs or other sports teams, Grad Class, 4H, and healthy seniors who need extra money.

We then went around the room again with the three tables sharing highlights from discussions on question #2.

2. What are some important criteria for a lead organization in our community?

- The consensus in the room was that **Boundary Family Services** is the only organization with the capacity and experience and has a Boundary-wide presence to deliver the Better At Home program.

Other considerations and criteria for United Way and the lead organization to consider are:

- To have solid Credentials, has roots in community, is established, has relationships in good standing.
- Transparency, Confidentiality agreements and follow a Code of Ethics are very important.
- Safety is priority! Safety of volunteers, contractors, clients, criminal record checks.
- Stay true to 'Mission statement' and the mandate of the Better at Home program – Don't take on more than you can handle!

- Lead Organization should be flexible to needs of community, able to respond to changing needs of community.
- That the Lead Organization has:
 - consistent funding,
 - is able to provide consistent services, and
 - has infrastructure in place to create a realistic budget.
- That the Lead Organization is able to:
 - Hire the right skill set, pre-determined skill set
 - Effectively partner with IHA for example,
 - Work with established organizations within catchment communities.
- The BH Program should provide:
 - Ongoing opportunities for training, recruitment, CPR, basic support, grief support, confidentiality,
 - Provide workshops and Training for people who have family and friends with declining memory
 - Provide supports for caregivers
 - Celebrate volunteers, provide honorariums
- The Lead Organization needs to know that:
 - Older adults and community – tend to be entrenched within ‘their’ community.
 - People from the local community would be best to serve the seniors from that community. The hope is that there is less time and resources used to travel the distance. It could also be supplemental income for residents.
 - Volunteers from Beaverdell serve Beaverdell residents
- UWLM needs to know that:
 - The Better at Home program should be flexible with jurisdiction and/or catchment boundaries;
 - Serve Bridesville out of Osoyoos(South Okanagan BH), Big White out of Kelowna Better At Home.
 - Must recognize and respect differing cultures within communities, provide access to translators.
- The BH provider should report locally; perhaps report to local government.
 - It was explained that the organization reports to the United Way of the Lower Mainland on an annual basis on the grant received for the Better at Home program.
 - That there will be a local Better at Home Advisory Committee established to inform and support the Boundary program.

Lunch was served by Twisted Forks

Better at Home Stakeholder Meeting

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 70 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 meeting 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

*69 out of 70 programs reporting

From April 2018 - March 2019*:

 **11,596**
active clients

 **179,446**
services provided

 **4,609**
new participants



Better at Home in the Interior

- **\$1,725,750 invested**
- **15 programs**
- **2,066 seniors received at least one service**
- **615 new seniors enrolled**
- **60% are female**
- **37% are between 75-84**
- **1,431 live alone**
- **411 volunteers engaged**

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



Better at Home in the Kootenays

Better at Home programs have been established in the Kootenay region for since 2012. Currently there are programs located in:

- Castlegar BH hosted by Castlegar & District Community Services Society
- Creston Valley BH and East Shore BH hosted by Valley Community Services in Creston
- Nelson BH hosted by Nelson CARES
- Cranbrook BH hosted by Community Connections Society of Southeast BC
- Arrow Lakes BH hosted by Arrow & Slocan Lakes Community Services in Nakusp
- Columbia Valley BH hosted by Family Dynamix Association in Invermere

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 the *Kootenay Wayfinders Community of Practice* and connect several times per year for learning opportunities and to support each other's programs.

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 the some or all of the services from the basket using a mix of paid staff, contractors, and volunteers. Better at Home Program Coordinators presented a brief synopsis of how the program operates in their community and services that are delivered in their area.

Presentations by:

Sandi McCreight, BH Program Coordinator – Castlegar Better at Home, host organization Castlegar & District Community Services Society

- Serves the communities of Castlegar, Ootischenia, Blueberry, Robson
- Offers two (2) of the services; Light Housekeeping and Friendly Visiting
- Has a mix of volunteers and external contractors
- Has 93 Active Clients and performed 1851 unique service moments in 2018-2019.
- Noted that there are two significant pieces of the BH program;
 - o 1) being the structure of the organization, the HR, IT, accounting, management of volunteers and staff
 - o 2) the connection and trust established between the organization and the seniors.
- Is all about approach: How one approaches the volunteers, contractors and clients!

Louella Cann, BH Program Coordinator – Arrow Lakes Better at Home hosted by Arrow & Slocan Lakes Community Services

- Serves Nakusp, Arrow Park, Burton, Fauquier, Edgewood
- Offers all seven (7) of the BH services
- Is considered a Rural and Remote BH program
- Serves a geographic region with 76 km between service points and includes a ferry.
- Has a mix of volunteers, contractors and paid staff that deliver the services
- Has 55 unique clients and performed 1234 unique service moments across the 7 BH services in 2018-2019.

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:

- Clients must be 65 years of age or over
- Clients served must be residents of the identified service area
- Determine fees for service(s) based on provided Sliding Scale.
- The program must have a paid program coordinator
- The organization that receives and is accountable for the funds must be a non-profit and charitable organization.
- The program must seek in-kind support (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' needs.
- 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 the Boundary BH program

An ideal timeline was suggested for the BH program be:

- Mid September 2019 a Lead organization be identified.
- Late September 2019, the Lead organization meet all grant criteria and submit BH Grant Application.
- A signed Letter of Agreement for dispersal of funds be for October 1, 2019.
- A Program Coordinator be employed in time to participate in the Provincial Better at Home Communities of Practice Meet-Up in Richmond, BC on Nov 6, 2019. Travel bursary Funds have been set aside for reimbursement of travel expenses for 1 Program Manager and 1 Program Coordinator from Lead Organization.
- Nov. and December 2019 be establishing the program.
- That BH services be delivered to seniors no later than January 1, 2020.

The three organizations that were initially identified as potential lead agencies were all sent Better at Home materials to inform their decision to present including:

- Better at Home 2019/2020 Application
- Better at Home 2018 Annual Reporting Template
- A list of program criteria a lead organization must meet.

Although agencies were encouraged to collaborate from the onset of the community consultations, only one organization elected to present:

Boundary Family Services (BFSS)
Darren Pratt, Executive Director

Dialogue with Community

Following the presentation by Darren Pratt, Executive Director, Boundary Family Services, there was an opportunity for community members to participate in a dialogue. The Better at Home Coordinators from Castlegar and Arrow Lakes were asked to participate in the dialogue as well. What follows is a synopsis of the questions and comments from the dialogue.

What service delivery model would be best for the seniors in our community?

Q: How do you (BH Programs) find referrals?

A: Sandi and Louella both shared that they receive referrals from Interior Health, family, friends and neighbours of potential clients.

Q: How would the information/awareness about Better at Home get out to seniors?

A: community newsletters, advertisements, word of mouth.

- Sandi McCreight, BH Castlegar, has only advertised twice in the program's history, for volunteers. Seniors tend to find the program and many referrals come through Interior Health.
- Louella Cann, Arrow Lakes BH, speaks directly with clients about services and refers as required.

- West Boundary Community Service Coop could ‘advertise’, Boundary Family Services also has community access points.
- Darren Pratt, BFSS, shared that there are staff and agency connections very excited to be a part of the program should BFSS move forward with the grant application.

Q: How would the Better at Home Advisory Committee be established?

A: Cathy Straume noted that she is heartened to hear that BFSS could be the lead organization. She suggested that a minimum of 3 people on any advisory committee be from ‘our end’ – Christian Valley, Beaverdell – as the community is very diverse and people are leary of people they don’t know coming on their property.

Martin Fromme, Mayor, Midway, suggested that the Age-Friendly Initiatives from communities be a source of support. Perhaps a member from the committee could sit on the BH Advisory Committee.

Darren Pratt, BFSS, suggested that a minimum of 1 person from each community be on the Advisory Committee. That BFSS would only take on this program if the communities and people from the region actively participate in the program through volunteering, community support and advisory supports.

Darren has a lengthy history and connection to the region with 15 years in youth mental health and addictions. He has deep respect and love for the people of Boundary, particularly the western area.

Q: How much funding is available from UWLM for the BH program?

A: Currently, the UWLM grant is for \$70,000 per annum, April 1, 2020 – March 31st, 2021. All BH programs can fundraise or source other revenue to supplement the services delivered.

Q: \$70,000 is so little, how much will be left after administration fees?

A: Currently, the UWLM grant does not allow for more than 12% of grant dollars to go toward Administrative Expenses.

Next Steps

No decision was made at the Community Input and Stakeholder Meeting on August 28th. UWLM will be take the Top Priority/requested BH services from the Morning Table Discussions, the grant and program criteria and continue the conversation with Boundary Family Services. BFSS Board will visit the grant application and Community Engagement Meeting’s feedback at its AGM in September 2019.

Thank you!

The day would not have been possible without the support of and guidance by Christine Brooks.

Thank you to Sandi McCreight and Louella Cann for your support, Better at Home expertise and information and facilitation during the day.

We are also appreciative of the Grand Forks Curling Club for the wonderful venue and Twisted Forks for the delicious nourishments.

Thanks to each of you for attending the day with a 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, for trusting the unfolding facilitation process and being supportive of working within complex challenges presented in our communities.

Further feedback, comments or questions can be directed to:

Jessica Kleissen

Regional Community Developer, Interior, Population Health

United Way of the Lower Mainland

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