



## **United Way British Columbia's Healthy Aging Program Community Consultation & Stakeholder Meeting**

**Chetwynd & Tumbler Ridge**

**Held: February 23rd, 2022 at 10:00 AM**

**Presented for Review March 23, 2022**

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## 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 British Columbia (UWBC), with services delivered by a local non-profit organization. UWBC is collaboratively working with communities in BC’s North, Lower Mainland and Central & North Vancouver Island.”*

The **Chetwynd** region has been identified as potential **Better at Home** site. The United Way British Columbia assessed community readiness, identified seniors' assets, needs and priorities in regard to the potential delivery of the **Better at Home** program.

The Chetwynd region includes the communities of: **Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge**

This report reflects the community input and stakeholder meeting held on **February 23, 2022 (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. This report focuses on the **February 23, 2022** meeting where participants shared their interest in having a Better at Home in their community. Further individual conversations were held from early February and March to assist in the selection process and recommendations were submitted for approval in March and confirmed in early April.

The meeting attendees included members of the public and representatives from key stakeholders from the entire region. Invitations were sent to stakeholders including the local First Nations Bands 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 Chetwynd and surrounding region and included key stakeholders, the health authority and local government.

*United Way British Columbia 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:

**Sarrah Storey**, Regional Community Developer (RCD), Northern British Columbia, United Way British Columbia

**Cathy Holmes**, Provincial Community Planner, Better at Home, United Way British Columbia

**Sarrah Storey** acknowledged territorial lands of the First Nations Communities and our use of their land for this meeting. After a bit of housekeeping, we welcomed participants.

## Introduction to United Way British Columbia's Healthy Aging program

To better support older adults to be socially connected, live healthy lifestyles, and maintain independence, United Way British Columbia's (UWBC) Healthy Aging program's 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. UWBC's Healthy Aging program 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*, *Men Shed's*, *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 program's Strategic goals is to increase physicality to help older adults remain socially connected and active as they age.

*Reduce social isolation:* The UWBC's 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 UWBC's 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.

**Healthy Aging Core Canada** was launched in the Spring of 2021 and Programs and Initiatives profiled on *Healthy Aging CORE* provide examples of the important work being done by local, provincial, and national organizations and the value of these programs and initiatives in promoting health and well-being and fostering resilience for seniors.

The knowledge hub was created for **Community Based Seniors' Services** (CBSS) 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.

For more information visit and/or join Healthy Aging Core at [www.healthagingCORE.ca](http://www.healthagingCORE.ca)

## Community-Based Seniors Services sector (CBSS)

The key stakeholders of the province's broad and diverse CBSS sector, including seniors themselves, form an extensive network that is connected through Healthy Aging CORE (Collaborative Online Resources and Education). Besides this provincial knowledge hub, the sector shares information, knowledge, expertise, and experience through learning events, Provincial Working Groups, Regional and Provincial Consultations, Communities of Practice, and the Biannual Provincial Summit on Aging. Between September 2020 and May 2021, eight virtual Regional Consultations and one Provincial Consultation were held.

These community engagement mechanisms are guided by the CBSS Leadership Council, and play an important role in informing their work, as well as keeping the CBSS sector informed about new resources, programs, and research relevant to the sector.

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.

The slide is titled "Southern Cariboo Community Consultation - PowerPoint" and is presented by "Cathy Holmes". The content includes a map of British Columbia with various program icons (green house, purple heart, blue square, orange circle, red cross, yellow question mark, blue square with a person) placed across the province. A legend on the left lists the following services:

- Better at Home
- Family & Friend Caregivers Support Programs
- TAPS (Therapeutic Activation Programs for Seniors)
- Social Prescribing Program
- Navigation and Peer Support
- Digital Learning Pilot Project:
  - Active Aging Plus Program
  - ITech Packages

Below the map, the United Way logo is displayed with the text "Working with communities in BC's Interior, Lower Mainland, Central & Northern Vancouver Island". The footer of the slide shows "Click to add notes" and includes standard Microsoft PowerPoint navigation icons.

## **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, from to 2021-2023, BH will expand to serve between 21 and 25 new program accessibility points for British Columbians. **Chetwynd** was identified as a potential **Better at Home** host site.

Chetwynd is a significant geographical region and includes the communities of Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge and the surrounding municipal district. Hudson Hope is part of this region and was invited to the community meeting held on February 23, 2022.

The meeting on **February 23, 2022** could not have happened without the dedication behind the scenes of the following people from:

**Mayor District of Chetwynd, Allen Courtoreille**  
**Chetwynd Community Living Society, Dianne Neufeld-Hagen**  
**United Way Northern BC, Trista Spencer**

### **Chetwynd Community Consultation Participants:**

Mayor District of Chetwynd, Allen Courtoreille  
Chetwynd Community Living Society, Dianne Neufeld-Hagen  
United Way Northern BC, Taylor Hutchison  
Linda Studley, South Peace Community Resources Society  
Carol Newsom, District of Chetwynd  
Taylor Hutchison, UWNBC  
Rochelle Galbraith Alderwoman from Chetwynd  
Jason Farquharson, Company Officer Chetwynd  
Laurelle Watson, Executive Director, Tansi Friendship Centre Society  
Dan Golob Fire Chief/Municipal Emergency Coordinator  
Kristie Low, Conuma Resources  
Melyssa Reyland BCCRN  
Brigitta Ratschker, Department Manager South Peace Community Resources Society  
Chetwynd Recreation Center Steve McLain Director  
Melissa Milsap Chetwynd Community Library

### **The intent of the community meeting on February 23, 2021 was to:**

- Support isolated areas as soon as possible in order to help support seniors in the North and in particular the Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge region;

- That all seniors who need supports have access to bc211 and COVID-19 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 of Chetwynd & Tumbler Ridge:**

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 (*This is not an exhaustive list*)

### **Chetwynd & Tumbler Ridge**

Mayor District of Chetwynd, Allen Courtoreille

Mayor Tumbler Ridge, Keith Bertrand

Corporate Officer with the District of Tumbler Ridge, Aleen Torraville

Chetwynd Community Living Society, Dianne Neufeld-Hagen

Chetwynd Mental Health and Addiction

Go Chetwynd, Carol Newsom

Councillor, Joanne Kirby

Fire Chief/Municipal Emergency Coordinator - Dan Golob

Chetwynd Seniors Housing Society

Pine Valley Seniors Rec Centre

Surerus Place Seniors Housing

Chetwynd Recreation Center Steve McLain Director

Communications Advisor for Primary and Community Care, Baily Denicola

South Peace Community Resource Society

Square One for Seniors

Northern Health, Lyndsay White

Penny Harrison

Alderwoman from Chetwynd, Rochelle

Aboriginal Wellness

Chetwynd Chamber of Commerce

Community Gardens

Chetwynd Community Programs/Emergency Food Program.

Kici Awismimasik Family Center

Moccasin Flats Metis Society

Northern Brain Injury Society (Dawson and Area)

Pine Valley Seniors Association  
The Sukunka Group Social Planning Society  
West Moberly First Nations community  
Women's / Stop the Violence Program  
United Way Northern BC, Trista Spencer  
United Way Northern BC, Taylor Hutchison

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**First Nations Communities including:** First Nations traditional territory acknowledge Treaty 8 First Nations, ancestral home of the Sikanni, Slavey, Dunne-za, Cree and Saulteau.

*Note: These communities are not included in the below population demographics as they were not available in the most recent census (2016)*

## Community Demographics Chetwynd

According to the **2021 Census**, the population of the Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge:

### In 2016 the statistics showed:

Chetwynd Tumbler Ridge and Hudson Hope Statistics (2016 Census)

5505 people live in the region  
680 over the age of 65  
85 people over the age of 85  
13.9% Average population of seniors  
6.04% are at or below the poverty line

### First Nations Communities

Saulteau First Nations  
West Moberly Lake First Nations

### Closest Better at Home Agencies

Dawson Creek  
Fort St. John

The average rent in Chetwynd and on average the cost for a one-bedroom apartment was approximately **\$1,200 - \$ 1700** per month, and without utilities. Utility costs, at the time of writing, are inline with the national average; however, transportation is very limited in this region. (Please note that Hudson Hope

was originally part of this expansion, but due to the geographical area, UWBC management made the decision to expand into Hudson Hope in future.)

### Chetwynd Tumbler Ridge and Hudson Hope Statistics (2016 Census)

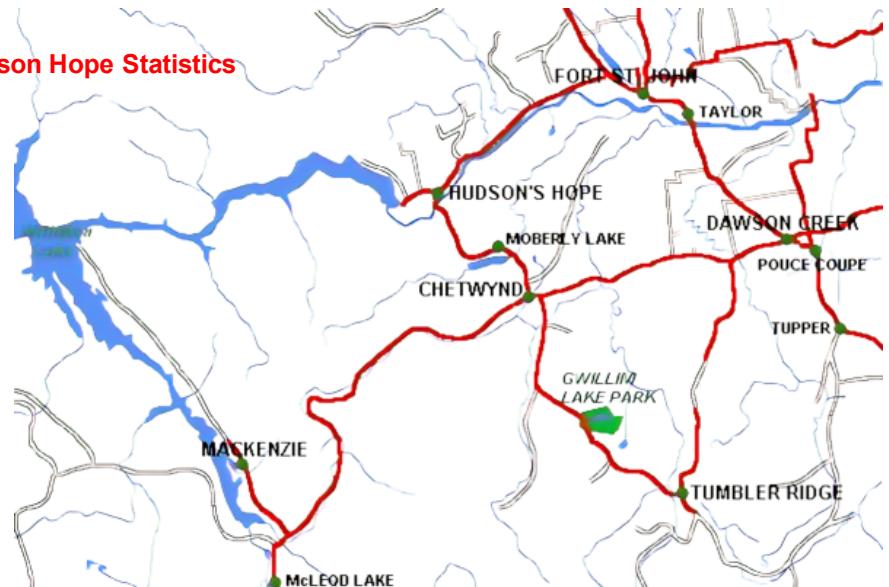
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Working with communities in BC's  
Interior, Lower Mainland, Central  
& Northern Vancouver Island

## 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 9<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

Chetwynd has a tightly knit group of community advocates who look after each other and particularly during COVID the focus was to pull together these resources. Many found that during the heat dome, floods and the pandemic, volunteers were a bit more difficult to come by, but they continued to support the community as best as possible under the circumstances. In their desire to stay engaged in community, they work together in partnership with various agencies to ensure that the seniors who live in their region are a priority.

## Feedback & Questions from Meeting Participants

After a bit of housekeeping, the meeting began with an overview of Better at Home and the United Way British Columbia's Healthy Aging program's contributions to the North.

## Community Conversations

After the PowerPoint presented by Sarrah Storey and Cathy Holmes, the participants were invited to speak about the current landscape of services for older adults in the Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge region. The following are excerpts from the meeting on February 23, 2022 over Zoom. (*Italics* are direct quotes from participants).

**Mayor District of Chetwynd, Allen Courtoreille** was invited to speak: *Right now, we are looking at a place to serve our seniors to leave their home, their forever home, once they leave that they need a place to stay and, in the past, we sent them to other communities to live out the rest of their live, which is terrible in my view, but we need places that for them so that we can keep them living in the community where they grew up and have families and the families won't need to take the time to go to them in Dawson Creek, Fort St. John wherever they are placed. We have a couple in town where seniors have and can live on their own. One is Surerus Place, where they are assisted partly in their day-to-day needs. So, that part, right there in itself gives me...one part is the housing and one of the things that Sarrah brought up was the stubbornness of human beings and that comes from – we deal with the mental part right, the mental part so with this pandemic part, we found out that we are very fragile in that part and we need to understand. And, if this was given or somebody has the opportunity for someone to come into their home either just to sit with and listen or to stop by and say hey, 'we are here with you' that is a pretty big part of mental capacity to just have someone just sit and listen. Getting older, and as a male and working all our lives, we're depending on it. And now it is the ladies; the ladies that have worked 30/40 years and I've been independent all their life and think I'd like to be independent again in my senior years. So, this housing stuff is a big critical part of the building of your mental capacity when you turn old and you're thinking you are at the end, right, that you are...and you're not working anymore... and soon that all starts rolling into one and you start thinking that you are not part of society; so anyway, it's the housing part right now in Chetwynd and I think across British Columbia. That part, if we can address some of that going forward,*

*particularly here in Chetwynd because we are industry based and just like everywhere else, forestry, mining and a gas company comes in and puts pipeline down once in a while right...so anyway, we've got this demographic and we want to keep people here and the seniors are a big part of it. This is quite nice to hear and bring this little presentation to us here, Cathy and Sarrah.*

**Cathy:** *Oh, thank you, we do recognise that housing is a problem throughout the province, and there are provincial initiatives that are working currently on the housing and the complexities of housing. It's a bit beyond the scope of what Better at Home is able to do; however, it is a compliment in the sense that because housing is such an issue, having a person to come into the home and support elders as they age in place is really critical and we do know that according to the Seniors Advocate, and some reports that were done in the last couple of years that a large number of people could have likely aged in place had support services been available to them much sooner. In many cases, they are living in facilities that they perhaps could have avoided with the supports of something like Better at Home.*

Cathy went on to discuss some of the highlights of Better at Home and reminded the participants that we want to work on leveraging community assets and building on current supports in Chetwynd before turning the conversation over to Mayor Allen.

**Mayor District of Chetwynd, Allen Courtoreille** – *I have another one that the PRD is looking at regarding aging in place, the Regional District is looking into it and I guess we are looking at in the same ways as looking at Better at Home, trying to get a little bit of stuff done in their homes and so they don't have to leave their homes. It hasn't taken off yet, but we are talking about it at that level.*

**Cathy:** *Is there an organization that you are working through or are you just doing it from the Regional District?*

**Mayor District of Chetwynd, Allen Courtoreille** – *Just the regional district right now.*

**Sarrah:** *So, Allen, in the Fort St. James area they actually are taking money from the tax payers there and that helps their transportation program. We top them up 10,000. We have a regional model, Fraser Lake, Vanderhoof, and Fort St. James. Vanderhoof gets 20,000, Fort St. James gets 10,000 and Fraser Lake gets about 70,000. They (Fraser Lake) hold the program and do all the reporting and they still have to give their numbers but that upper region gets the funding (for transportation) and they called a boat, and they made it happen and that's the agreement they made, the transportation. It's the only thing they do in that region. In Vanderhoof they do transportation and a little bit of housekeeping, and in Fraser Lake they do the entire basket of services. So, each community can do it differently depending on who is holding the program. So really, there are three communities here and a really big geography. So, it's can be 45 min from Vanderhoof and another 20 min from Fort Saint James but we are all together, doing our own thing. You guys are going to have to make your own decision here, and let's just say that the program is hosted in Chetwynd, and then you have a coordinator in Dawson Creek, and you have a program coordinator in another community and you then say well, 'you are only working five hours a week, and you're working another 5 or 10 hours a week it's going to be different' and you guys are going to have to come up with some sort of plan and see how you can use the money the best way and, and its not always easy in the beginning but if you have municipal support and you have Regional districts support then you can spread the dollars farther. It does go a long way.*

Sarrah: continues by sharing her experiences working as a Program Coordinator and she noted that the Mayor and Council at that time didn't want to support it. She expressed how important it is to have the local governments support and remarked how Chetwynd was very engaged in community. She also discussed the local communities and that it isn't a huge amount of money to host these programs, the municipal dollars can help make that difference. She discussed the leveraging of Northern Health – pivoting in small communities and helping out with Mrs. Smith and utilizing volunteers to support these details and how important it is to collaborate.

Cathy: Went on to bridge the conversation and brought to the attention of the meeting the importance of the Advisory Committee, and/or Steering committee and who some of those participants may become contributors and described the support which may include the needs that may change in community. She explained that no two BH programs are alike, while the framework may be similar. She discussed various ways that services can be delivered including using in house staff, others who rely on volunteers, but facilitation and priority being a paid coordinator. The number of hours that person holds is up to the community. She then moved to the agency discussion, specifically to who could potentially host, service community and how that gets broken down. Statements regarding the importance of a strong agency, reporting, funding and many of the intricacies UWBC including the collection of support materials available. She clarified that new programs will not have to reinvent the wheel in order to get programs off the ground. Further discussion regarding the importance of key stakeholders, mentors and local experts helped to round the conversation before moving on to the next speaker. It was also important to drive and steer the support by community and for community.

**Chetwynd Community Living Society, Dianne Neufeld-Hagen:** *I'm just looking at the list of services in the basket and the thing that stands out for me is the transportation. Medical appointments from Dawson Creek, or other area hospitals are interesting. Another is the light home cleaning as it is important and Northern Health isn't able to do anything other than medical care and I see them not being able to get a lot of stuff done out of their home due to the constraints of the home support workers. So, it is funding that we would be interested in possibly doing.*

**Cathy:** *So, if I hear you correctly, would your agency be able to host the program?*

**Chetwynd Community Living Society, Dianne Neufeld-Hagen:** *Well, it could be. We are used to doing the reporting for MCFD and have other reporting programs; we did help earlier through the pandemic. We did do some grocery shopping, and that sort of thing and touching base with seniors and I think that that was well received, and there are so many things that are out there and available to them, but people just don't know where they are and I think we need to focus on that if something like this was to be offered in our community. They just don't know that it is there.*

**Cathy:** *You're absolutely right. A big, big part for program coordinators is navigating the services in community and sharing the information with seniors.*

**Chetwynd Community Living Society, Dianne Neufeld-Hagen:** *I'm not sure if Carol had any input on that? Rochelle as well, they know a lot of the needs in the community?*

**Rochelle Galbraith Alderwoman from Chetwynd:** Dianne, I think you nailed it right there. People don't know what they don't know and I think that is the hard part. Who knew there was so many resources available through the United Way and I certainly didn't? And so, I think communication is key, and I think that getting it out to our seniors in any way we can configure it. Dianne also mentioned and is also on my list, something that the district has been working on for some time is transportation for seniors. We do have the Taxi-Saver program, in Chetwynd and I believe Allen was just working on revising the form where we didn't need doctors' signature and that just gives them a break on the fees, and they can probably speak to it better than me, but if they need to take a cab from point A to point B, or they need to get where ever they need there is that available from the district of Chetwynd. Support for our emergency shelter and Tansi has that and I don't know if Tansi would be a good resource to let know what is out there. I know, and think Dianne's agency is very well capable of doing this and they have some amazing, amazing workers. I honestly think that communication is key and letting our seniors be aware of what is available. I'm sitting here taking notes going, 'Oh God, who knew?' I love this program and I think its great and I really want to thank you guys for bringing this to our attention!

**Sarrah:** Some communities don't have taxi's and many don't, but those that do you can do a voucher system. Smithers is just doing that now and they are a new program so they're doing it. They work with the taxi company and let's just say that Mrs. Smith makes only 10,000 a year, you can make sure that Mrs. Smith is paid for and you can give the vouchers. Obviously, the seniors that can afford to pay, pay and the sliding scale has quite a bit of movement to work with, and sliding scale has 50% or 70% or a hundred subsidy to help make this all work. Sometimes the seniors will come to you and say that they need new dentures, or glasses or something and I can't actually pay this month, so you can change them on the scale and it depends on their needs. You'll do a one-on-one meeting and you'll never know what will happen on a daily basis. And we don't know what we don't know and I know that I've experienced it from the agency perspective. Having a great facility is really important and I really want to push this in the province, because if you have a great facility and it has a kitchen and it has the senior's ability even with Covid, to walk in, sit down and have a cup of tea, sit down and have a meal. These are the best and it has a lot to do with Elder Abuse, because when they can sit down and get comfortable with the Program Coordinator and they get to know them and trust them, it is so comfortable with working with you, but the seniors begin to trust and then they will tell the coordinator some things that they might not have otherwise told and its about safety. That helps and it makes a huge difference in the seniors' lives. I know a lot of programs that go and get their "Its not Right" certification from the BC CRN and you can help with financial, physical abuses, neglect and there is a lot we can do in this role. If you can put it in a facility that can help the seniors and elders by providing food and then giving them, some training it helps. Vegetables don't move, but sweets etc., we have a great cook that comes in but the foodshare programs and it is all housed in the same place. Yah, they are not vegetable eaters, that stuff doesn't move. They want dessert!

**Cathy:** While Fraser Lake does have the opportunity to provide a meal, not all agencies can do that or have the facilities. Food is not actually part of the Better at Home program, although because of Covid we have been able to support and pivot to help seniors in communities, but in actual programming food isn't a part of the basket of services. As a stand-alone program, this is where a collaborations and partnerships can really work. Maybe Dianne's agency doesn't have a kitchen, but maybe another agency partners with them to support a food delivery system. It is really all about the community ability. Brigida may have someone in Linda's organization and so you can weave something great in community. There is a true community of practice. When you become part of the United Way family you have peers and mentors that can come and help you. I can tell you from experience you never know who you are going to need and Sarrah talked

*a little about this, but in my case, I had a great relationship with the Police Department and when seniors go missing, and sometime they do, the RCMP connection becomes really helpful...Your program can see many things but your relationship with community can be so valuable. Sarrah, can you speak to the Community of Practice?*

**Sarrah:** Yes sure, so Linda and Brigida, are part of a COP which we technically should do more often, but what we do is bring all the coordinators together into the same room or same Zoom room and we talk about what is going on, what we did right, what we can do better and we share resources and it's a really great system because it really helps coordinators to feed of each other and learn and then take that back into community. They call each other behind the scenes and share information, forms, whatever they need to talk about and it's a really great thing we do here. Another thing we do is the Provincial Summit on Aging and the Provincial Better at Home Meetup. The summit isn't always for program coordinators, but a lot can be learned from this and its for the Executive Directors and Agency management but the Better at Home meetup is really where the Program Coordinators can learn and meet and talk about things going on in their region and it is happening at the end of April. We do it every couple of years. So, if this program is going by then we will be inviting you to Richmond. This helps train and help out new programs. The Better at Home Handbook is updated and is ready so you'll have that. There is also CORE and you can get lots from that at [Healthyagingocore.ca](http://Healthyagingocore.ca) and there is lots of information on there and there are a lot of resources, and you can join the Better at Home group, the newsletter, and that is where you'll see the funding announcements, so it is a good thing to look at. Cathy has put the address in the Chat Box.

**Jason Farquharson, Company Officer Chetwynd:** I am with Northern Health and I see lots of faces I know and so I don't need to make too many introductions. I have to make the pitch for transportation as we don't have a lot in Hudson Hope or Tumbler Ridge and so there is a bit of a taxi-service, but there is a hesitancy of that service to take seniors to appointments, to doctors because if they go to Dawson Creek or for appointment somewhere else, they need x-rays or need surgeries, etc., these are things that northern health has limited resources to help support that. One of the things and I don't know if this is the right place for this but we are dealing with more seniors and more seniors want to stay home and pass at home. One of the struggles we are having is we don't have the specialty beds for their homes, and wondering is that something we can partner with or can get some ideas on and with some of that funding, or even part of it in Tumbler Ridge we have those beds, but we don't have the community support to help with those beds.

**Cathy:** I hear your plight, but unfortunately that particular ask is part of a medical services program and the Better at Home program is mostly a non-medical program but having said that, having a Better at Home program in the three communities of Hudson Hope, Tumbler Ridge and Chetwynd, will allow there perhaps to create connections through this support. The good news is connections are always built and the opportunity to network and share as programs expand it is difficult. We always rely on Hospice for the Palliative environment. Unfortunately, people passing over is one of the aspects to this job, and sometimes program coordinators experience being with people when they pass over. It's a bit beyond the scope of the program but it is important to recognize that being with someone who is passing over is really a gift. I have been a witness to this and while it doesn't happen often, as a former program coordinator I saw and experienced many things. It was a great privilege to be there for seniors particularly when they passed over.

**Sarrah:** You will find that sometimes you will be asked by the health authorities to do things, that are not part of the program, and you have to make sure that we in small community's pivot, you'll see a pivot a lot particularly when parents live in Vancouver, and their parents live in a small community, you will see a lot of pivoting around an older adult, but transportation and housekeeping is really important.

Sarrah continued to speak about TAPS programs etc.; and trying to keep people out of the hospitals with thinks like friendly visiting and activities to keep people out of the hospital setting unless they need to be there. She talked about pilot programs including other programs that UWBC fund to keep seniors getting the supports they need and to lessen the burden of them going to hospital to have these needs met. It is helpful to have Better at Home in this capacity.

**Laurelle Watson, Executive Director, Tansi Friendship Centre Society:** Meals on Wheels facilitated by the village, in the senior's center and I see the need being housekeeping and transportation.

**Rochelle Galbraith Alderwoman from Chetwynd:** Meals on Wheels program is an individual who took it on herself to get it up and running. They charge seniors \$10 a meal and the money go to the cook. They have senior volunteers taking the food around and there are other agencies, the banks deliver and now there is a formed society they can buy the dishes and ext.

**Laurelle Watson, Executive Director, Tansi Friendship Centre Society:** We have seniors come in on Wednesdays and they are served a warm meal, play bingo, and other games, and we do chair yoga with 2 hours a week and on Fridays the entire community can join in. We hope to do some home skills program that they were hoping to get going and this program might fit in well with that.

**Brigitta Ratschker, Department Manager South Peace Community Resources Society:** Program in South Peace Community – a lot is a need we all know and there are programs in your community that you know about but it is a matter of connecting the seniors to the programs you have and this is a huge aspect of what BH does. Linda has made a resource list. Here is the list we can help you with this. Another thing, it's housekeeping that is important for seniors to stay in their homes and that is another important level of comfort for a senior. Hygienically they can stay there and not lose pride in their home. Another is snow removal and they can't get out, or meals can't get delivered, its an important piece for people to be able to get out of their house. Another is the lawn care, in the summer and it is mostly done by volunteers. Transportation is another once and we know that there is some transportation in Dawson Creek but many small communities need to go to Dawson Creek to get service because it is only found in a bigger center, like Fort St. James or Dawson Creek for medical treatments and transportation is the most important part of staying at home. I am so excited for Chetwynd, Hudson Hope and Tumbler Ridge and we want to help with community of practice and if someone may be able to take it on...we can help, we know what it is like to bring this on. I personally believe that you know your community best and its good to get people involved and you know who they are so it is really, really good.

**Cathy,** Thanks Brigida and to your point about the health authority, yes, we need to also have a program coordinator who is strong and is able to set some boundaries with the Health Authority. Sometimes the HA can really push back with inappropriate referrals or demand, and we need to be able to push back and let the HA know what is in our circle and what isn't.

**Brigitta Ratschker, Department Manager South Peace Community Resources Society:** Yes, the home support – we often get these referrals and we need funding for many of the asks. Sometimes you have to deal with waitlist. And you don't want cross the line between the medical piece and the things Better at Home can do. You have to be careful with this.

**Cathy:** Yes, we work together not to open a pandora's box and just stay within mandates and sometimes we have to shift in community but that is when the COP's can really help.

The conversation continued with boundaries around the health authority, working together, on a client-by-client basis, issues surrounding confidentiality, northern health and Better at Home working together and further conversations around elders and older adults passing away and the gift to be present with the person and sometimes it is the Better at Home Coordinator who is with a senior when they pass. The conversation then went to what it is like to open a new program.

**Linda Studley, South Peace Community Resources Society:** I started this in 2010 and they put me in an office and said here is a program – build it! And yes, I can relate to much of what we have talked about today, and the one of the most important reasons it succeeds is that it isn't a one size fits all. It's been important for communities to build what they need. It's been a great experience to partner and collaborate with others and it has definitely given rewards now. And even meeting every quarter to talk about what we need. We meet every few months and talk about what the seniors need and it's really helpful. We have the SINs group – Seniors Individual Networking group and we talk about our community and what we need. And we can support our sister agencies and in the end the seniors are the winner. Sometimes we have to fundraise. We have never had to run a waitlist but we know that we will go out and fundraise to get what we need. I'd love to be able to mentor and help out if Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge and Hudson Hope were able to get this program. This is definitely a program you want to run in. It is a great thing for your community and I have had a lot of support from the United Way and have gotten a lot of support for this program. And I will drop another bombshell, that in the next few months I'll be retiring.

**Sarrah:** Oh no, you are not allowed to leave!

**Linda Studley, South Peace Community Resources Society:** Oh, my goodness, not going very far and will probably volunteer. It's been a great ride and there have been a lot of ups and downs. I have to say though; I always say: This is not an emergency program, so if it's not an emergency and if something comes up take your time. Talk with your advisory committee, talk with your agency. Take your time to come up with the right answer to the issue and solution. Never feel pushed into anything. I have seen coordinators burn out because they are low on volunteers, so they go and do things themselves. I have seen people burn out like this and it the coordinators job is to coordinate. Be aware of what is available so you can pass that on. The medical part of it is – we don't have a volunteer drive a senior to a medical appointment for a procedure, because then you are putting the volunteer in the role of a caregiver. It isn't the role of a volunteer to be a caregiver, so we won't do that. You have to think about how does this part of the program play out. Does it put the volunteer at risk, the senior at risk, the agency? How will this decision effect the program and stay the course? Don't get pushed into doing what you shouldn't be doing.

**Cathy:** Linda, that is such sage advice. Thanks for that advise. Everyone really needs to remember that Better at Home is not the be-all end-all program in community and everyone needs to know that there are

*other pogroms in community and that we can't rescue everyone or everything. We are a compliment to other programs and services. We are a companion services but not replacements of other existing services. Dianna – your agency is being well received and this is great. There are some others with their hands up. Melyssa go ahead.*

**Melyssa Reyland BCCRN:** *From what I am hearing the Better at Home program would be the best of two worlds and able to fill the gap, with the medical stuff the way it is and families being far away, the health authority. I vote for Dianne's agency to take on the program! I think it would be a good fit for us.*

**Steve McLain Chetwynd Recreation Center Director:** *I'll jump on but don't have a camera right now. It's been an interesting talk. It sounds like a great program. My role is in recreation and we do have a really active group of seniors who come out and use our facility every week. I can see us helping out in that area and I would be interested in talking with anyone hosting the program in that area. I'll help in any way that I can and thanks you two for bringing this to our attention and its really something that is near and dear to me and I really appreciate your time and effort.*

**Cathy:** *Well Steve, you were one of the first people to say 'yes, I want to jump on that meeting' and actually Allen was the first, then you Steve so I was really glad it is near and dear. When it comes to seniors' issues, we know in community you must have a bit of a passion for working with older adults and seeing from their own eyes what it is like to stay at home and its just so great to see the dignity in that - so thanks for everything you do in community.*

**Melissa Milsap Chetwynd Community Library:** *It's an honour to join you all today. The Chetwynd public library partners with a lot of the services that are here today and a few of us have just been trained on dependability and so to offer more services out there to our seniors and our elders is great. Personally too, I have not only networked with Melysa through the network and all the network things we can provide, but also my mom is one of the residents at Sireus place and she has just been injured and we are very grateful for the home care and everything that she has received there. And so yeah, just to grow and bring more good things into community is just great and so yeah.*

**Cathy:** *And your mother, is she okay?*

**Melissa Milsap Chetwynd Community Library:** *Yes, she is moving from Vernon back to Chetwynd and she's broken her leg. But, ya, she's a fireball and is 88 years old and she is wonderful and she is beautiful and so she is recovering from that. And she is a heart of community and it take a community to raise a child and a community to be there for your seniors and elders. The Chetwynd Public Library is here to help in any way, any way possible, that we can.*

**Mayor District of Chetwynd, Allen Courtoreille:** *Before any one goes, I'm glad you bring up the idea so seniors being "gifted" and you know that's really important. And myself growing up in a small community, this all comes down to child to senior. We go from childhood to senior and they go and they age out, and hopefully we all do that, and one of the things that was very important to the seniors is...remember the seniors gifting and passing... and that was one of the things that happened when I was growing up, and it was one of the sacred things that happened and same with birth. You know those two things tied together and it means a lot to my culture and to every other culture cause passing on was very important to that*

*person and this Covid made it very difficult, very difficult for people to hold one's hand as they were passed on, so some of the gifts that we lost during that time were very, very...I don't know how to say, it made us feel like we were in jail and we never got out, never, and we are slowly getting out now, slowly getting parole other than saying that it is ending, this gift that you are talking about Cathy, I know exactly what you're talking about. And, building a barn, seniors that actually did this, built a barn, going to somebody's place, and that's where they got the news and they got the pat on the back and they got everything from everybody's family that was around there, cooking and doing everything for what's needed to be done to build that barn. So, this stuff we are doing here is kind of like building a barn. Right...and we talk about the networking, very important and when you come to Chetwynd come up to Tumbler Ridge, Dawson Creek and you get to meet all these fine people this is what we do. Small communities and the building the barn that you ladies are doing is very important because I can't tell you the importance. And I can tell you about the gifting part, it is something that is so essential to the wellbeing of a human being and human beings is what we attain to get and human beings is what we are and there are some great human beings on the call and on the beam me up Scotty television show...and I state that because it is very important and I know exactly what it's like and it's about birth and about passing and the gift of passing on. And children are the gift from God and from the creator and so I always say that.*

**Cathy:** *I raise my hands to what you just said. Huy ch q'u OCM. I raise my hands to you and to everyone that has been on this call today. As we have taken a good hour and a half today to talk about this, I just will get us into this mode of what do we do next. We will be saying goodbye in just a moment but before we do that I would just like to acknowledge everyone that was at the meeting today and let you know that we will be doing our due diligence to bring this to your community – I hear Dianne's organization stepping up and I hear the support very clearly from the community for Dianne's agency to potentially host the program and so before we pursue further we just need to know that we have the support of the community and it sounds like we absolutely have your support.*

Cathy summarized next steps and discussed timeline for the program placement. The meeting then formally closed for the day.

### **Following the Meeting:**

Sarrah and Cathy asked Mayor Allen to stay back for a few minutes so we could briefly review what we spoke about at the meeting and to get some clarification around the geography of the area.

We asked about logistics in the town(s) and approximations of supports for seniors. Mayor Allen was very generous in sharing his perspective, noting that anywhere the program would be held would be a good choice as seniors in the area would welcome these services.

After the meeting, Sarrah and Cathy met to review logistics. We learned that one of the candidates that is cited in this report, did not have some of the requirements essential to host a program under the UWBC Letter of Agreement.

In reaching back, Tansi Friendship Center Society received recommendations from Mayor Allen and from Dianne, Chetwynd Community Living Society noting that they would be comfortable working in a collaborative way with Laurelle Watson, Executive Director, Tansi Friendship Centre Society.

Laurelle was approached, and indeed was interested in hosting the program. There was much discussion regarding feasibility, timing and ability to host the program as soon as April 1<sup>st</sup> 2022.

Discussion around geography ensued between the RCD and the Provincial Coordinator and it was noted that the investment for the 3 communities of Chetwynd, Hudson Hope and Tumbler Ridge would be impractical. A conversation with Kahir Lalji, Provincial Director was called and a collaborative discussion took place. It was decided that we would pursue this expansion, but the geography would include Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge only and that Hudson Hope would be considered in further expansions.

An email conversation with Northern Health and Tim Rowe was sent curious about Northern Health's support of BH potentially expanding in the North. The conversation regarding insight specific to Tansi Friendship Center Society ensued and Tim shared that he hadn't experience with working alongside Tansi but felt that the community approved of the partnership. He supported the expansion in Chetwynd and it's placement at Tansi Friendship Center Society.

Following further conversations with RCD, Provincial Director and Provincial Community Planner, Tansi Friendship Center was approached to consider hosting the program as they have many seniors' programs and were able to meet all of the criteria.

The following letter on interest was received dated April 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:06 AM:

Cathy,

*Please accept this email as a letter of interest in the Better at Home Program running through our centre for Chetwynd and area. The Tansi Friendship Centre Society is a non-profit organization with Canada Revenue Agency charitable donation status. We would be partnering with the District of Chetwynd, the Chetwynd Society for Community Living and any other organization or close community that would like to have been assist with services to our seniors and elders. This has been a need in our area for many years and we here at the TFCS have the capacity to take this amazing project on.*

*Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.*

*In Friendship,*

*Laurelle Watson*

Executive Director

Tansi Friendship Centre Society

[executivedirector@tansifcs.com](mailto:executivedirector@tansifcs.com)

250-788-2996

*"We acknowledge the Dunne-za peoples, the traditional keepers of this land, for allowing us to work, play, and reside on their traditional territory."*



Negotiations began and the implementation process of Better at Home protocols took place. It was recommended to pursue Tansi Friendship Center Society to host the Better at Home program in that region.

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

- Connection to service groups throughout communities in the Chetwynd
- 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 UWBC 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 British Columbia 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 85 **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.

### **Better at Home Programs in Northern BC**

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

Currently, **Better at Home** can be found throughout the province; however, the following programs became HUB Agencies. They supported the efforts of Safe Seniors Strong Communities using a Hub and Spoke model to ensure that most communities in the North would be served during the pandemic.

**South Okanagan Similkameen** – OneSky Community Resources Society – Penticton  
**Okanagan & Shuswap** – Seniors Outreach Services Society – Kelowna  
**Thomson Nicola Cariboo** – Northern Community Services – Kamloops  
**West Kootenays & Boundary** – Valley Community Services – Creston  
**East Kootenays & Columbia Valley** – Interior Community Services - Invermere

**Better at Home** in the North can be found in Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Fraser Lake, Smithers, Houston, Telkwa, Prince George, Kitimat, Quesnel, North Cariboo, Prince Rupert and Williams Lake. While there are 15 formal **Better at Home** programs in the region, there are several smaller communities served in the North. 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 North, several First Nations communities both on and off reserve receive services. Close relationships with First Nations Health Authorities have proven invaluable. There are two FN Communities Better at Home FN Programs in the North and UWBC intends to further expand in the region in the upcoming years.

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 two **Community of Practice** (COP) sessions who formally meet two to three times per year serving all Northern Programs in British Columbia; however, with COVID-19 they met more regularly as the needs of community changed and evolved. Host organizations also connect via the **Better at Home Working Group** (found on Healthy Aging 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.

Local Better at Home agencies can be of great value to new programs. It is encouraged to new programs reach out to the local representation and Regional Community Developer for guidance.

The Regional Community Developer (RCD) in the North is currently Sarrah Storey. She can be reached at [SarrahS@uwbc.ca](mailto:SarrahS@uwbc.ca).

## Emergency Response

During COVID-19, which at the time of writing, continues to be prevalent throughout communities in the province, Better at Home has been instrumental in supporting seniors during the pandemic through the Safe Seniors, Strong Communities (SSSC) COVID -19 Response. Highlights of the program are as follows:

### 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 the time of writing, over a million services were delivered - SSSC services have been provided to seniors in British Columbia which may have included one or more of the following:**

- Seniors (65+) No cost for Service Delivery
- Urgent non-medical needs resulting from COVID-19
- Living independently in community 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;
  - UWBC Program Funds budget,
  - and a Total Program Funds budget.
5. Provide any other documentation considered key by the community or by UWBC 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 Chetwynd

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

- July 2021– March 2022– Work with the community to identify a *Lead Organization* for Chetwynd
- Mid March 2022 confirm the Lead Organization intent to apply to be the host of Better at Home in the region to fulfill and meet all application and grant criteria
- A signed Letter of Agreement for dispersal of funds be for April 2022
- A representative of the agency participates in the Provincial Better at Home Communities online COPs by April- May 2022
- At least one BH service be delivered to seniors no later July 2022

The UWBC Healthy Aging program 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 Regional Community Developer & Provincial Community Planner, Better at Home

The meeting on February 23, 2022 was a small sampling of the community; however, due to the devastation of floods, wild fires, and heat domes the aftermath has left the community with many challenges around capacity. Volunteers, agencies, supplies and exhaustion have overtaken, while the community's resilience has remained strong.

It became very clear that the seniors of the Chetwynd community, Sarrah Storey, Regional Community Developer (RCD), key stakeholders, and seniors have felt the challenges of COVID19 and in these communities have relied on larger centers to provide essential services. Many of the communities in the Chetwynd already struggle with transportation issues including a lack of public transportation. Many older adults need options to get to medical appointments and find that there are few options to support them.

After considering the existing resources, it was determined that there were not many in the region that could support hosting the Better at Home program.

It was determined that the most suitable agency to host this program in Chetwynd is **Tansi Friendship Community Society**. Not only does the agency have capacity in all levels, it also has access to other Better at Home organizations that share their values and can mentor growth. This agency has already made connections, in their learning processes, to determine if they had the necessary understanding of the inner workings of a program so they could make an informed decision.

**Tansi Friendship Community Society** has a proven track record of building solid relationships with existing programs and working in collaboration with community.

- It is the recommendation of the Regional Community Developer and the Provincial Community Planner that the best fit for Better at Home in Chetwynd is **Tansi Friendship Community Society** noting that relationships with agencies in Chetwynd and other stakeholders may form lasting partnerships as the program develops.
- It is also the recommendation to use the naming convention of **Chetwynd Better at Home**.
- **United Way British Columbia – Trista Spenser** supported **Tansi Friendship Community Society** and would support the application. While UWBC in the North are currently not funding this agency, they have been a “*trusted partner*” in the past.
- It is also recommended, that after communications with the communities, the contract be awarded to **Tansi Friendship Community Society \$ 85,000 to host the Chetwynd Better at Home Program**. The Letter of Agreement (LOA) would be used to support the communities of Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge.

## Why Tansi Friendship Community Society?

- 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 including First Nations Health Authority
- 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

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 (RCD) 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 **Chetwynd** and we are grateful for the opportunity to bring the **Better at Home Program** in your region.

Thank you, **Kahir Lalji**, Provincial Director, Government Relations & Programs 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 **Sarrah Storey**, RCD Northern BC, United Way British Columbia for her co-facilitation and insight into the region. Special thanks to the team of **UWBC's** Healthy Aging Program, including **Bobbi Symes**, Assistant Director, Population Health, **Jessamine Liu**, Administrative Assistant, Population Health, **Camille J Hannah**, Provincial Coordinator, Population Health, **Jean Rikhof**, 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 participating during the entire community engagement process and particularly on February 23, 2022 with the desire to co-create a shared future that invests in 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:

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