



Better *at* Home



**United Way helping seniors
remain independent.**

United Way British Columbia Healthy Aging

**Community Consultation & Stakeholder Meeting
Kimberley, BC**

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Lisa Cyr, Regional Community Developer – Interior

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Introduction

Better at Home is a program that helps seniors with simple day-to-day tasks so that they can continue to live independently in their own homes and remain connected to their communities. The program is funded by the Government of British Columbia's Ministry of Health, and managed by the United Way British Columbia (UWBC), with services delivered by a local non-profit organization. UWBC is collaboratively working in 90+ communities throughout the province.

In recent years, the Ministry of Health has allocated funds to expand into a number of communities. Lillooet was identified as a community that could benefit from the program. As such, a process was initiated to bring Better at Home to the community during the 2023-24 fiscal year. Due to the timing of the presentation and end of fiscal, Kimberley will be folded into the 2024/25 fiscal year. This report provides a brief overview of the program and its requirements, as well insight as to the community's readiness.

About Better at Home

The Better at Home program helps seniors remain in their homes by providing non-medical 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 is managed by a paid Program Coordinator. Every year, the need to support existing programs and welcome new ones becomes apparent, as these programs 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 a basket of services that includes the following: friendly visiting; transportation to appointments; snow shoveling; light yard work; simple home repairs; grocery shopping; light housekeeping, and other services that are unique to the community.

Community-Based Seniors Serving Sector (CBSS)

The key stakeholders of the province's broad and diverse Community-Based Senior's Serving Sector (CBSS) includes community based organizations, the health sector, and seniors themselves. Together, they form an extensive network that is connected through Healthy Aging CORE, the information and resource Hub for all Healthy Aging initiatives.

The Healthy Aging CORE (Collaborative Online Resources and Education) portal is a space where practitioners, agencies and members of the CBSS can collaborate, learn and access resources. CORE is designed to provide up-to-date information, resources, funding 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.

In addition to the CORE portal, the provincial knowledge hub, the sector shares information, knowledge, expertise, and experience through various learning events, Provincial Working Groups, Regional and Provincial Consultations, Communities of Practice, and the Biannual Provincial Summit on Aging.

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.

Bringing Better at Home to a Community

United Way BC has designed a process, in which each prospective community will go through a community engagement process to determine the suitability of the community to meet the need, and mandate of Better at Home. In this process, stakeholders – seniors in particular – have a say in shaping 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. Given that in many rural and remote communities there is only one main, multi-service agency that provides services to the community, it is often the case that this agency will be the Better at Home lead agency.

Identifying a lead agency

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 Better at Home application form, identifying the following:
 - a) Governance structures, financial statements
 - b) A description of geographical boundaries for service delivery
 - c) A list of the Better at Home services that will be offered by the program
4. Provide a completed budget which will include:
 - a) UWBC Program Funds budget
 - b) 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.

In addition to this, any Better at Home program should also meet the following criteria:

1. Participants served must be residents of the identified service area;
2. Provide in-kind support and seek additional funding as needed e.g., donated office space, equipment, etc.,
3. Comply with evaluation requirements (data collection, reporting, participation in Community of Practice).
4. Establish a *Better at Home Advisory Committee* to support, guide, and help the integration of the program into community and be responsive to seniors for the first two years.
5. Establish strategies to maximize reach / impact of the program, volunteers, and in-kind support.
6. Undertake outreach, marketing and public awareness to reach older adults.
7. Provide Volunteer training and support.

Better at home programs are...

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.

Senior centered. The local programs are designed to respond to the needs, priorities and changing circumstances of seniors. Seniors are engaged in the planning and governance of the local programs.

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.

Kimberley Expansion

Kimberley is a small community located in the East Kootenays (Southeastern BC), situated in the Purcell mountains within the traditional territory of the Ktunaxa. Its proximity to Cranbrook makes it an easy destination for many, however despite its lure to adventure tourists, the small resort municipality continues to grow in demand for social supports.

Community Demographics:

Seniors 65+ make up approximately 24% of the 8115 inhabitants in the Kimberley-Marysville area (and 47% of the population aged 55 and over)¹. There are approximately 1930 seniors living the community over 65, and a growing need for supports as the community ages, with 92% of this group meeting the Low Income threshold. According to Statistics Canada, there are 935 men 65 and older, and 1000 women in

¹ Statistics Canada. 2023. (table). *Census Profile*. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released March 29, 2023. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-ajm/pov/001/index.cfm?lang=en>

that age same age group. Currently, there are only 195 individuals aged 85 and older (75 men and 125 women) however we know that in time, this number will increase over the coming years. The average age in Kimberley is 44 years old, so again, we can anticipate demand to increase over the years, as this segment of the population ages².

First Nations

Kimberley lies within the Ktunaxa territory, though the town itself was created by settlers to develop mining in the area. No First Nations groups or services were represented at the event.

Expansion to Kimberley

For several years now, the need to service seniors from the Kimberley area has been identified by our funded partner in Cranbrook, Community Connections of Southeastern BC. The need was later expressed by our partners in Invermere, Family Dynamix. While Kimberley was not initially slated for expansion this fiscal, it was decided that the funds originally slated for Lytton would be put to better use in Kimberley as Lytton is still rebuilding post wildfires.

Kimberley Community Assets

A community asset is something that adds value to the community. This can include the skills held by community members, networks, initiatives, programs, financial resources, structures, or any other resources that can be leveraged to improve the community's sustainability and well-being. Kimberley has a robust volunteer and non-profit sector particularly where food security is concerned. There are also many agencies that support the social needs of seniors.

Community assets and organizations include:

- Cranbrook and Kimberley Hospice
- Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy
- Community Paramedics
- Kimberley Seniors Society
- Kimberley Helping Hands Food Bank and Food Recovery programs
- Seniors wellness in motion (swimming and social group)
- Seniors Helping Seniors program
- Family Friend and Caregiver program

In the fall of 2023, prior to the community consultation, United Way BC met with Sarah Jacklin Executive Director for Summit Services in Cranbrook and Kimberley, and Executive Director Nancy Reid for our existing Better at Home partner in Cranbrook, Community Connections of the Southeast Kootenays to discuss which agency might be best suited to host the program. Both were in agreement that Summit Services was the best fit, given that it is already providing services in Kimberley through the Seniors

² <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&SearchText=Lillooet&DGUIDlist=2021A00055931026&GENDERlist=1,2,3&STATISTICSlist=1,4&HEADERlist=0> (accessed February 12th 2024)

Helping Seniors program, and is connected to the seniors population. Both agencies also confirmed that Summit Services has the capacity and interest to take on this program based on the following criteria:

- Connection to service groups in Kimberley and area
- Interest in taking on the program and increasing supports to seniors
- Track Record for managing grants to support older adults
- Ability to manage the demands and expectations of the clients
- Ability to gather *In Kind* supports
- Has people “on the ground” in the community
- Possesses long-term sustainability
- Has the capacity and foresight for growth
- Active in the community for several years, in particular, offering services to seniors
- Cooperative and collaborative

Community Engagement

Given Summit Family Services’ enthusiasm and interest in bringing the program to the community, as well as the current support the agency is offering in the community, the RCD for the interior felt there was no need for agencies to compete for this program, and that the conversation between Community Connections of the Southeast Kootenays and Summit Family Services in addition to the community consultation was sufficient support for the agency to take on the program.

East Kootenays Regional Community Impact Coordinator, Tracy Amy provided on the ground support to secure the location, organize food and logistics to the event, as well as support with outreach and invitations to local Mayor and Council, MLA and beyond. Summit Family Services also supported with outreach in the area.

The Community Engagement session for the expansion in Kimberley event took place on **January 26th 2024**, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Kimberley Seniors Center, in Kimberley.

The Better at Home community presentation had a great turn out, with 36 attendees from a variety of stakeholder groups, as well as interested seniors themselves. Groups represented included:

- Doug Clovechock, MLA for Columbia River-Revelstoke
- Councillor X, City of Kimberley,
- Manager of
- Cranbrook and Kimberley Hospice
- Kimberley Helping Hands Foodbank
- Kimberley Food Recovery Program
- Community Paramedics
- Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy
- Kimberley Seniors Society
- Seniors Helping Seniors
- Seniors’ wellness in motion
- Community Connections of the Southeast Kootenays
- Interior Health
- Individual seniors themselves

The intent of the community meeting was:

- To inform community members about the upcoming program
- Identify needs and priorities for service delivery and programming
- Inform community members on the process and approximate timeline

Community Presentation

The Community presentation began at shortly after 10:00 to a fairly full house. Snacks and refreshments were made available to participants. After a few housekeeping words and a land acknowledgement, MLA Doug Clovechok was invited to open the session with a few words. He spoke about the increasing need for seniors supports and the opportunities that lie ahead to support seniors to stay in their homes and communities for as long as possible.

The presentation and engagement session were facilitated by Lisa Cyr, UWBC Regional Community Developer for the Interior and Sarah Jacklin of Summit Community Services. The presentation was also supported by the Nancy Reid of Community Connections of Southeast BC, our Better at Home partners in Cranbrook, as well as Community Investment and Impact Coordinator for the East Kootenays, Tracey Amy.

The Community Presentation consisted primarily of an overview of United Way BC's Healthy Aging program and the various grant streams. The group then discussed the Better at Home Program coming to Kimberley, including what is currently available and what the needs are in the community. Lisa also provided a general timeline for the implementation of the program, as well as what needs to be in place before the program could be rolled out. Attendees were especially interested in learning about what services would be provided, and in what time frame.

Sarah Jacklin of Summit Services also provided an overview the services they are currently providing to Kimberley and a bit about the organization and how they are suited to host the program. Nancy Reid then spoke a bit about what it's like to host a program, what the biggest needs are in Cranbrook and what they do to meet the needs of seniors in their community.

There was much discussion around what the needs of seniors are in Kimberley, but also an organic discussion emerged around the need for more information sharing and collaboration amongst agencies – which is perfectly timed with the new collaborative approach that United Way BC is now supporting. Agencies recognized that there were opportunities to better support seniors by sharing information about programs and by collaborating on services provided.



RCD Lisa Cyr speaks to the group about the Better at Home program during Kimberley Better at Home Community Presentation and Engagement Session.

Community Needs

During the pandemic, a shop and deliver program was carried out (and continues to be) by Summit Family Services. Today, the service continues to support seniors in their needs for grocery and prescription pick up; however, the program does not provide any additional services to seniors. During the community meeting, the needs of the community were discussed, and the following were identified.

- Large group activities or seniors groups to create more chances for seniors to interact
- Programming and service delivery for rural areas such as, Wasa, Wycliff, Ta Ta creek
- A working group that could create an all-encompassing document for services in the local area
- When referral items are created they need to be senior-focused through using accessible technology like phones and print.
- Local seniors utilize the food recovery program frequently. The program has identified that a lot of local seniors need access to healthy food and meals. The program also identified that it would be beneficial to have a large group meal and or opportunities for seniors to share a meal together.
- Housekeeping
- Home maintenance such as gutter cleaning.
- Many seniors access the Farmers Market coupons, this allows seniors the autonomy of getting their own fresh food.
- **More Hokey Pokey**
- Community Supports for people with aging family
- Transportation to local medical appointments as many of them are in Cranbrook.

Special Thanks:

Doug Clovechok, MLA Columbia River-Revelstoke

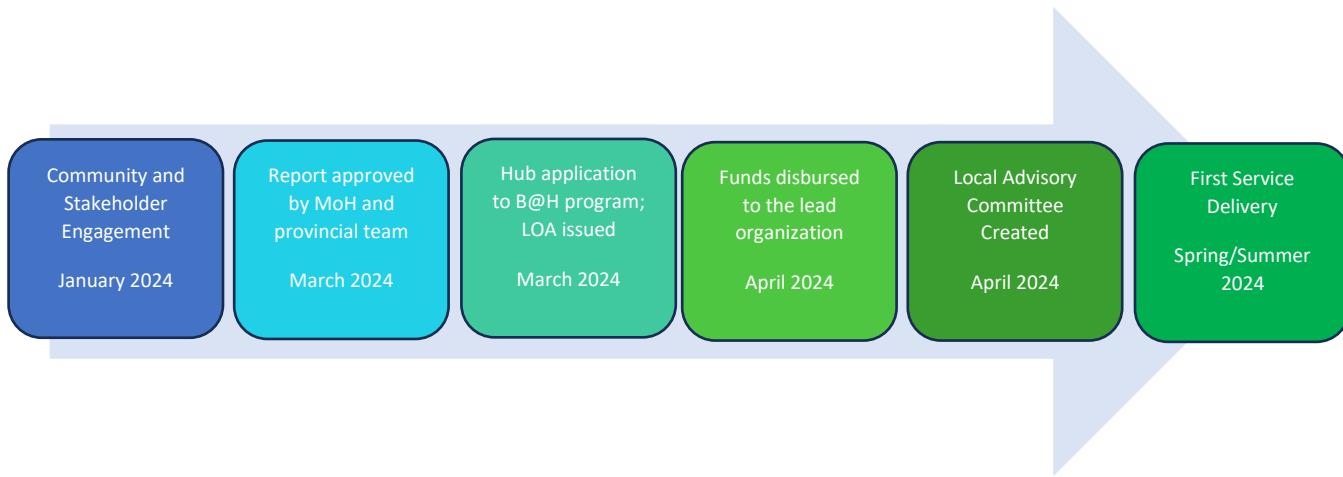
Sarah Jacklin, Summit Family Services

Kimberley Seniors Society

Nancy Reid, Community Connections of Southeast BC
Tracey Amy, United Way BC

Next Steps and Recommendations

Now that the community consultation and needs assessment have taken place, there are a number of remaining steps before the program is operational. The intended timeline is that they be able to apply for 2024/25 fiscal year and begin a normal fiscal cycle.



Throughout the process, it has been evident that Summit Family Services is an apt candidate to become the Better at Home lead agency for the community of Kimberley. It was also clear that participants were also in favour of Summit Family Services taking on this program, on account of their existing presence and ongoing commitment to the community. As such, Summit Family Services is being recommended as the lead organization for the Kimberley Better at Home program.

Findings of this report will be reviewed and discussed by the Better at Home provincial team and the Ministry of Health. Once approved, Summit Family Services will be invited to fill out an application outlining budget, services, catchment area and more. The Regional Community Developer will work with the prospective agency to support the application process, and once the application has been reviewed and approved by the RCD, the Letter of Agreement (LOA) can then be issued, and funds disbursed for the 2024/24 fiscal year. Once the administrative aspects are in place, the Healthy Aging team will work with the agency to train, support and facilitate a successful launch of the Better at Home program in Kimberley.

In order to make the process smoother, the HUB team will be responsible for the following:

1. Create an advisory committee
2. Register on the CORE Healthy Aging portal
3. Review the Better at Home guidebook

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who has made this process possible. It would not have been possible or as fluid without on the ground support from Tracey Amy of United Way BC.

Thank you also to the United Way Healthy Aging team, to Kahir Lalji, Director of Government Relations and Programs, for his vision and encouragement to expand Better at Home into more communities throughout the province of BC.

Special thanks to the team of **UWBC's** Healthy Aging Program, including **Bobbi Symes**, Director, Population Health, **Jessamine Liu**, Administrative Assistant, Population Health, **Camille J Hannah**, Assistant Director, 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, special thanks to all those who participated in this event and helped make it a resounding success!

Comments and questions can be directed to:

Lisa Cyr (United Way)

Regional Community Developer, Interior

lcyr@uwbc.ca