



United Way helping seniors
remain independent.

United Way British Columbia's Healthy Aging Program

Community Consultation & Stakeholder Meeting
Ucluelet and Tofino

August 24th, 2021 at 10:00 AM Via Zoom

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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 Interior, Lower Mainland and Central & Northern Vancouver Island.”

The **Ucluelet & Tofino** 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.

This report reflects the Community Input and Stakeholder Meeting held on **August 24th at 10:00 AM (via Zoom)** and will be shared with invited guests and used by the lead organization to design an appropriate local **Better at Home** program that meets community needs.

The meeting attendees included members of the public and representatives from key stakeholders from the entire region. It was attended by 15 individuals including 3 representatives from the United Way British Columbia (UWBC). Invitations were sent to 59 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 Ucluelet & Tofino region and included key stakeholders 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:

Terry Harrison, Regional Community Developer (RCD), Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands British Columbia, United Way British Columbia

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

Terry Harrison 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

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.

Better at Home Expansion Sites

Over the past few years, there has been considerable interest in expanding the **Better at Home (BH)** program to more communities in BC. Based on a reviews of community population, data and needs assessments of prospective communities, in 2021, BH will expand to serve up to six (6) new program sites in British Columbia.

Ucluelet & Tofino was identified as a potential **Better at Home** site.

The meeting on **August 24th, 2021** could not have happened without the dedication behind the scenes of the following people from:

Ursula Banke Community Liaison / Employment Centre Coordinator WorkBC and the chair of the West Coast Seniors Services Network

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

Ucluelet & Tofino Community Consultation Attendees:

- Jane Osborne / BCCRN, Member of West Coast Seniors Services Network
- Cathy Whitcomb / Forest Glen/Sea View Seniors Housing Society
- Pat Sieber/ Seaview Seniors Association
- Ursula Banks /WorkBC, Coordinator West Coast Seniors Services Network
- Tarni Jacobson/Pacific Rim Hospice Society
- Faye Missar, Coastal Family Resource Coalition
- Pat Seabird /Seaview Seniors
- Diane Harskamp/ Seniors Housing Society
- Jan Draeseke – Crows Nest
- Randy Oliwa /Senior in Community
- Vi Monday /Senior in Community
- Julie Rushton/ United Way British Columbia Vancouver Island
- Kahir Lalji /Provincial Director
- Terry Harrison / RCD Vancouver & Gulf Islands

Invitations were sent to:

Mayor Dan Law (Tofino)

Mayor Mayco Noël (Ucluelet)

Ucluelet Chamber of Commerce

Tofino Chamber of Commerce/Laura McDonald

Debbie Mundy/Community Engagement Coordinator/Yuułuʔiłʔath̄ Government - Ucluelet First Nation

Alberni Valley Employment Centre

Banke, Ursula WCB/ West Coast Community Resources Society Network Coordinator

Barnes, Troy/ VIHA

Bill Brown, Island Work Transitions Inc

Erin Cassidy / VIHA

Britt Chalmers, Middle Beach Lodge

Bernard Charleson - Hesquiaht FN

Rachelle Cole, Dist of Ucluelet Counselor

Rachelle Cole, BC Emergency Services

Emilie Crist, VIHA

Dian McCreary/Reef Point (Recreation)

Jan Drasaeke, (SVSHS) Guesthouse

Maxime Dube' / Services Canada

Cynthia Filton, /VIHA

Abby Fortune, / The Cabins

Erika Goldt, Non-profit agency

Barb Gudbranson, / Cabin

Ava Hansen
Diane Harskamp
Craig Hounsell, VIHA
Tarni Jacobsen, Pacific Rim Hospice Society
Gord Johns, MP
Selena Lasota, NETP / First Nations Authority
Chief Anne Mack, - Toquaht Nation
Marcie Dewitt, Alberni Clayoquot Health Network
Martin, Shirley
Diane McCreary, Reef Point Lodge
Andrea McQuade
Faye Missar, Clayoquot Bioshpere Trust
And Coastal Family Resources Coalition
Sally Mole, Bamfield Community School Coordinator
Fred MontPetit, VIHA
Signey Moon, Tla-o-qui-aht FN
Margaret Morrison
Debbie Mundy, - Ucluelet FN - Community Engagement Coordinator
Bob Bullock (Executive Director) Ahousaht First Nation
Iris Frank (Education) Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation
Lisa Morgan, Director of Community Services - Toquaht Nation
Saya Masso (Tribal Administrator) Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation
April Nelson, Transition Care Liaison Nurse
Nest, CBT - West Coast Nest Lodge
Nicole Gerbrant - West Coast Nest Lodge
Rod O'Connell, VIHA
Randy Oliwa
Jane Osborne, BCCRN
Josie Osborne, MLA
Katherine Reeves, VIHA
Naomi Seitcher, Tla-o-qui-aht FN Community Services
Dist of Tofino Corporate Services
Heidi Shaw
Tom Stere, District of Tofino, Counselor
Barb Stevenson, Port Alberni Better at Home
Tate, Sandra - First Nation Health Authority
Theresa Gerittsen - ED, West Coast Community Resources Society
Therrien-McKinnon, Maureen

Tla-o-qui-aht Community Services
Hilary O'Reilly, Tofino Recreation
Jennifer Etty, Transition Care Liaison Nurse
Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA)
Vi Mundy, Volunteer
Cathy Whitcombe, Forest Glen Seniors
Suzanne Williams, Yuułuʔitʔath First Nation
Brook Wood, Division of Family Practice
Signy Maddon, United Way British Columbia / Central Vancouver Island
Julie Rushton. United Way British Columbia / Central Vancouver Island

The intent of the community meeting on August 24th at 10:00 AM was:

- Support isolated areas as soon as possible in order to help support seniors in Ucluelet & Tofino;
- 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 Ucluelet & Tofino

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*):

- District of Ucluelet / District of Tofino
- Mayor Dan Law – Tofino
- Mayor Mayco Noel - Ucluelet
- Coastal Family Resource Coalition
- West Coast Community Resources Society
- West Coast Senior Services Network
- Alberni Valley Employment Centre
- Sea View Seniors Housing Society
- New Horizon Seniors Program
- Pacific Rim Hospice Society
- Island Health
- Red Cross

- BC CRN
- Community Paramedic
- RCMP / Community Policing
- BC Emergency Services
- Clayoquot Biosphere Trust

First Nations Communities including: Nuu-chah-nult, Ahousaht First Nation, Hesquiaht First Nation, Huu-ay-aht First Nation, Opetchesaht First Nation, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, Toquaht First Nation, Tseshahat First Nation, Uchucklesaht First Nation, Ucluelet First Nation.

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

Community Demographics Ucluelet & Tofino

- According to the 2016 Census, the population of Ucluelet & Tofino **3649**
- **550** persons are 65 years and older
- **65** over the age of 85
- In 2016, **550** seniors over the age of 65 **15.7%** lived independently in their own homes
- **9.9%** lived below the poverty line in the region
- Average Cost of a home in 2021 on average **\$800,000 Tofino / \$ 600,000 Ucluelet**

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 10th 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

The Ucluelet and Tofino Communities through the West Coast Seniors Network, an informal network of community agencies and community members have been working together in an effort to establish a BH program in their community; many who have come together over the last few years to discuss the feasibility of hosting a Better at Home program and other senior services to their region. This network has a paid facilitator, a distribution list of over 60 individuals, and an advisory group of 10 individuals. Over the course of several years, this group has, under the leadership of Ursula Banks, created much of the groundwork of community readiness. Their endeavors also support the creation of this coalition to have been instrumental in applying for Age-Friendly status with the World Health Organization to serve communities in their region.

As this network has been meeting for some time, they have established an advisory group which resulted in three potential candidates to host/lead a new Better at Home program in the region. Pacific Rim Hospice Society, Coastal Family Resource Coalition and West Coast Community Resources Society were introduced to UWBC's community consultation in August of 2021.

In brief, please find a summary of each of the organizations mission in community:

Pacific Rim Hospice Society (PRHS) provides care and support for individuals and families facing life-threatening illness, injuries, death and bereavement. PRHS has a *Friendly Visiting Program* for seniors, a gentle *Walking Group* and provides weekly *Seniors' Luncheons*. They also assist seniors who need to borrow health equipment from the Red Cross such as a walker or shower chair; and, borrow books from our lending library.

Coastal Family Resource Coalition's mission is to develop capacity on the West Coast to address the needs of children, youth and families and communities. Improving communications and networking between service providers, agencies, communities and funders.

West Coast Community Resources Society is a non-profit organization which believes that every person in the community should have access to resources to enhance and improve their well-being. The Society delivers a range of free and confidential services from *The Coastal community Services Hub* in Ucluelet and from their office in Tofino. The programs operate in all West Coast communities.

Highlights & Questions from Meeting Participants

Better at Home would be a welcome addition to current community supports in Ucluelet & Tofino.

A discussion regarding capacity ensued early in the conversation as it related to one of the presenters. Coastal Family Resource Coalition recognised that the work of building a program, as a sole agency, was beyond their capacity at this time. The speaker, Faye Missar mentioned that there are a number of

issues on Vancouver Island around housing and that their focus was (at the time of writing) the upcoming Housing Report. She noted that typically, *“it is the work of the coalition to share information, more so than the implementation of a program.”* They were of the understanding that their role would be as part of the advisory committee and in that capacity, they could assist the successful candidate in supporting the program. At the meeting they clearly supported a program coming to the region, however felt it was beyond their capacity to hold the role as lead agency.

Tarni Jacobson presented on *Pacific Rim Hospice* and her role with the *West Coast Seniors Service Society*. She talked about their capacity, highlighted the agency, and described some of the current programs offered by Pacific Rim. They run a variety of senior centered social programming in partnership with other agencies on the West Coast. She expressed that transportation, overall, on Vancouver Island, is a challenge, particularly in remote areas and that there was definitely a need in their communities particularly in getting seniors to and from appointments. Isolation is also a *“big deal”* for seniors and their groups included opportunities for connections, through their walking groups, and social gatherings over coffee which have been very valuable to seniors. The hope is to eventually expand to offer Tai Chi and other programs. She is part of the network because she has seen first hand where program participants have thrived as a result of belonging to many of the programs offered by agencies in the coalition. The inter-connectedness of the group helps to keep isolated seniors from falling into the gaps.

RCD Terry Asked Tarni: *Would you consider – out of the basket of services...adding to that, what you are already doing in community, have the capacity to include some of the services out of the basket of services to work with volunteers and others to do some of those services such as grocery shopping or housekeeping or some of the others we spoke about?*

Response: *Yes absolutely...right now our grocery store is amazing and is already doing some deliveries. Over Covid we were looking into providing this and our local grocer was already doing it. Seniors just had to call in and their groceries were delivered, and they have been just great, but I definitely see the need for light housekeeping for many of our clients...particularly in their homes, I see personally the need for this for seniors.*

The conversation then turned to *West Coast Community Resources Society (WCCR)* who was unavailable to attend this meeting. It was decided that the RCD and Provincial Community Planner would invite them to a Zoom conversation to determine the readiness of their organization to take on the BH Program. (The meeting, held on September 9th was an exploratory conversation. During the discussion, Theresa Gerritsen, interim Executive Director of West Coast Community Resources Society, explained the transition that the agency was experiencing. While Theresa welcomed the program coming to the region, her major concern was capacity. In particular, bringing a program of this caliber to WCCR with potential uncertainty within their own agency needed to be considered. Theresa said that she would discuss the matter with their board and if the board felt it would be a suitable fit, she was asked that they write a letter of intent via email to UWBC.) In following up in early October, it was determined that they were not yet able to commit, nor did they decline opportunity; rather would welcome it coming to their community *“preferring to be through their transition,”* but *“would not want the west coast to miss the opportunity.”*

The meeting on August 24, 2021 continued with Ursula suggesting that “*Senior View Seniors, in looking at the model contracted in Port Alberni, consider working in tandem with an assisted living society with Better at Home as a discrete program under the umbrella?*” Jan Draeseke, from Forest Glen discussed the model posing a further question: *Would Better at Home be available to people living in supportive housing?* Jan discussed loneliness and noted the enormous need for supports in their lunch program, need for exercise programming, and she could see that BH could have huge implications for seniors in housing. Her curiosity was around non-medical services being provided to residents clarifying that in supportive housing, particularly at Forest Glen, supportive housing is exclusively rent subsidy.

In answering this question, Terry clarified supportive housing as being “*supportive thereby receiving supports*” and that it would depend upon the level of supports they were receiving. If they are in assisted living, they would not qualify, but in supportive they could, depending upon the level of service a supporting housing society already offered.” Terry noted it as a “grey area” noting that purely rent subsidy, residents would still have access to services that were a part of the basket, and that it would absolutely be a part of the conversation.

At the close of this segment of the conversation, it was recognized that while this may be an option to consider, it would not be the best fit to host the BH program.

A short conversation regarding “*people power*” illustrated the volume of agencies that were becoming short on “*manpower*” as COVID 19 rules have changed and some of the definitions of social housing have been affected, including the rules as it relates to assisted living, drawing on all of their resources to cope with the pandemic. Further, a notation that the proportion of participants in this meeting are women.

An uplifting take, regarding the positive parts of COVID are in showcasing what this community is already doing and it was noted that the volume of need for Better at Home outweighs the need throughout the province. We spoke of Kahir Lalji as the “*boxer in the ring*” going into battle with government to consistently champion for more funding and that work continues to be a priority for UWBC programs. We discussed that the investment for local programs as seed money to get the immediate concerns supported. We discussed the age of 65 as being the entry age noting that persons under that age are provided services on a one-off basis at the discretion of the agency. The UWBC is cognisant of the older adult’s priority to services.

Pat Seabird said, “*I am reminded of my time in Revelstoke for 30 plus years, and worked with early childhood development committee there, and one of the things we did in the early 2000’s was call anybody who had anything to do with early childhood development from birth to when they entered kindergarten, and everybody had a little pot of money here, and a little pot of money there and we said, ‘look, instead of us trying to work our programs in isolation, let’s put everything together on the table, let’s set up a committee that draws from public health, that draws from education system and draws from the daycare centers and everybody that has anything to do at all with it, and let’s see if we can design our programs so we can use these little bits of money and work to the same goals’.* And we were quite successful with that and what I am hearing here, is what Revelstoke was to children we’ve got this big table where everyone is sat at, so it is exciting to hear what is available but I’m just wondering: How do we put it all together?”

Terry responded: “I think that’s right and that Better at Home is another seat at the table. Not “The” seat, but “a” seat.”

Jane Osborne reflected on her last 6 or 7 years of working with the *West Coast Senior Service Network* stating that there are a “*variety of creative solutions, and that much of the creativity will come out.*” Matching people and services can come through community in rural and remote areas of the west coast. “*The west coast is particularly creative and can accomplish things that some of the other programs can’t because it is rural, Ucquelet well...and things that unlike cities of Nanaimo, which are so different because everyone is at the table; health authorities are at the table, our Divisions are at the table, there are people engaged with Coastal Family Resource Coalition and the Alberni Clayquot Health Network that include first Nations and a whole variety of folks.*” She continued: “*I just wanted to add my vote that this is something that they will be able to accomplish, and that I’ll be there to support in any way that I can.*”

Vi Monday, shared that she has been a friend of Ursula for many years and “*has kept tabs on her*” involvement with the community. She commented that she has been reading about the BH program and feels that the program is really needed on the west coast. As a volunteer, retired now, she still remains involved where ever she can. She was invited to speak her mind about the current situation in her particular community and what has stood out for her. She responded by saying that in her community of about 200, since COVID, has been hard to keep connections as the restrictions tighten and so she shared the Zoom invite with many people from their health center as well as administrators. One of the things she plans to do is to “*go and start meeting with seniors, at a luncheon and I’m looking forward to talking to them and asking how they, as volunteers can help move forward.*” She said: “*Some seniors don’t have computers or laptops, and so it is just a way of opening up the door and building close relationships again. We have lost a few seniors. mostly due to age, and we are always on the lookout for their welfare and making sure they are following the protocols for Covid and about 90% of people got their vaccination shots which was good to hear. We didn’t get any cases here, which is good to know and good to hear.*” She continued sharing that it, “*appears as though we are ready to get together, and do some planning and figure out what we do and how to help you know.*”

Terry wisely pointed out; “*It sounds like Vi epitomises active, engaged and connected!*” to which the entire meeting nodded in agreement.

The conversation moved towards the funding model. Ursula encapsulated the amount of work that it takes to get programs up and running and in building a successful program and if funding is not renewed it is difficult for communities. She was concerned about the wealth of experience in their group being wasted on exorbitant time in the *administration of programs* and she was hopeful that BH programs would have provisions in the funding model to accommodate, including the need to hire a program coordinator to support this role. There was also a discussion of hiring for their communities a grant writer in both of their cities reminding the group that many of the participants on the call are volunteers.

Terry and Cathy both spoke to this explaining the overall funding model, including the requirements of having a dedicated program coordinator at the helm of the BH Program. We highlighted the emphasis on support and the implication of programs reporting annually. Further, we offered clarity around reporting to simplify the workload. We explained the importance of data collection and how it is used to

propel our position to gain more funding opportunities. We discussed the importance of research, gaps, data and the contribution to gathering the information of older adults to inform government and community. There are tools in minimizing the effort by asking smart questions with purpose and the importance of finding the right fit in community to host programs. We explained that UWBC is not looking for a new lead or a new program every year rather the opportunity to support the right fit from the beginning. Annual applications are required, but we are not looking to move the programming from site to site; rather to support existing programs as best as we can.

Ursula – *In the funding formula what percentage is allotted to the community for a program coordinator?*

Cathy – *Administration is no more than 12% but that does not include the costs of a Program Coordinator. It is our hope that the lion share goes to service provision but we understand that it costs money to operate a successful program. Once the lead has been identified, Terry will work with the agency to support them regarding the budget. In order to support deliverables, we recognise there are costs to contractors and delivery of services and we recognise that need. We will work with the successful candidate to review the budget.*

A question regarding the model(s) and/or relationships with one or more agencies. Terry broke down the concept of partnering with agencies and different models that some agencies approach using the example of Pender and Saturna Islands. She briefly described this model as being a type of relationship where each agency was responsible for a program, and the administration was held by a singular agency and in the creation, all were aware of the partnership.

As the meeting wound down, a reminder that for further support of the program to talk directly to Terry Harrison, RCD Vancouver Island & Gulf Islands at terryh@uwbc.ca.

A brief introduction to the Provincial Meetup and CORE (BC Healthyagingcore.ca) was pursued. We spoke of the importance of coming together to collaborate, share information, learn skills, and associate with others in the province. We discussed the importance of finding an agency that has its own strengths and governance.

After a light conversation about the many tourists visiting their region, the meeting was adjourned.

- After the meeting, it was decided that an additional meeting was unnecessary and that Terry would reach out to West Coast Community Resource Society and a zoom would be set up to discuss their interest in the program. If there was interest, we would request a letter of intent and pursue the conversation from there. (*The letter was received on October 12, 2021*)
- Further, a conversation with Pacific Rim Hospice Society to unpack their level of interest, and capacity to host the program would also be necessary. It was decided that if they had capacity, we would request a letter of intent. (*The letter was received on September 27th, 2021*)

It is important to recognise that the *West Coast Seniors Network* works closely with Island Health Authority, Community Paramedics and the police departments to help navigate the needs of seniors in this region. While they were not at the meeting, Jane Osborne, Regional Mentor BCCRN for Vancouver

Island was part of the discussion and reminded the participants of the fluidity of supports due to the West Coast Seniors Network. Members of Island Health were invited to the meeting but did not attend.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A non-governmental program: Better at Home is managed by 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 82 **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 annual reports to the provincial office to monitor performance and progress.
- Program Coordinators engage in a *Community of Practice* (COP) 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.

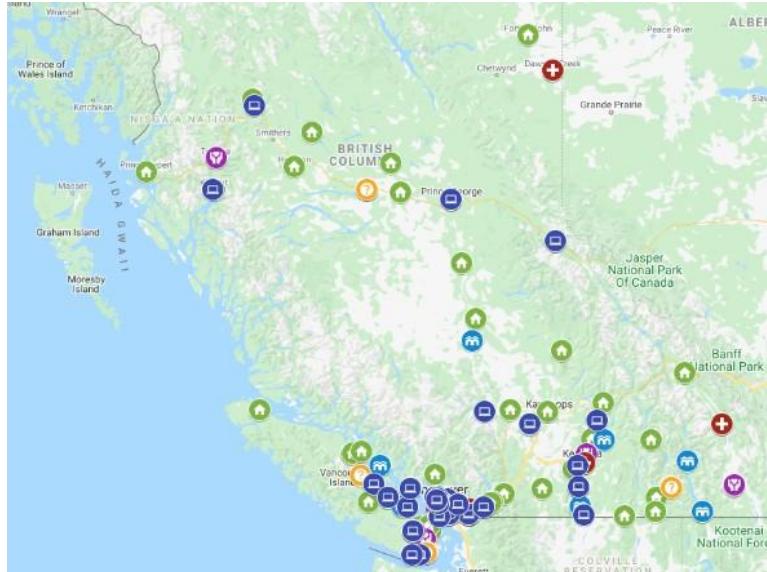
During COVID 19 Better at Home lead agencies were asked to pivot their funding to best support communities during the pandemic. In doing so, seniors all over the province were able to access services through **Safe Seniors, Strong Communities**. The province wide network of all Healthy Aging programs came together to serve seniors helping them to age in place safely.

The following graphs illustrate the scope of UNBC's Healthy Aging programs. Better at Home service deliverables were tallied in conjunction with services from the Safe Seniors, Strong Communities (SSSC) initiative.

Healthy Aging's province-wide network:

Currently **127** community agencies are providing **195** programs in BC

-  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



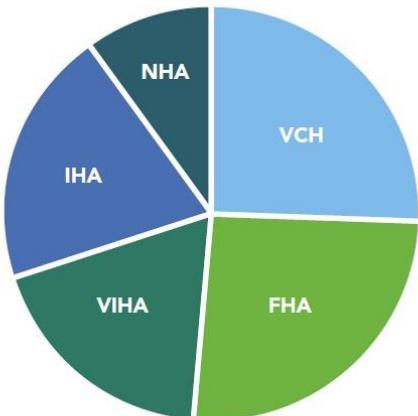
Working with communities in BC's Interior, Lower Mainland, Central & Northern Vancouver Island

2020-21 Highlights

Total Community Programming by Region

 Vancouver Coastal Health.....	\$3,923,610
 Fraser Health Authority	\$3,937,270
 Vancouver Island Health Authority ...	\$2,853,533
 Interior Health Authority	\$3,089,279
 Northern Health Authority	\$1,487,282

TOTAL - \$15,290,974



Total includes the following streams: Better at Home, Social Prescribing, Therapeutic Activation Programs for Seniors (TAPS), Family & Friend Caregiver Supports and Safe Seniors, Strong Communities programs.

Better at Home Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands British Columbia



In 2020-2021 - Investments on Vancouver & The Gulf Islands:

\$2,021,653 Million Dollars Invested

33 Healthy Aging Programs, including **16** Better at Home Programs

2210 - Seniors received at least one service from Better at Home

855 - New seniors enrolled

1688 - are living alone

1570 - are Female

761 - are 85+

16,039 – volunteer provided services

Better at Home Programs Vancouver Island & Gulf Islands:

Better at Home programs have been established on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands since 2012 initially under the CASI project.

Currently, Better at Home in the region can be found in: Victoria, Sooke, West Shore, Duncan, Galiano Island, Cowichan First Nations, Pender Island, Saturna Island, Nanaimo, Oceanside, Port Hardy, Gabriola, Salt Spring Island, Esquimalt, Saanich, Metchosin, James Bay and Port Alberni.

While there are 16 formal programs, there are several smaller communities served in the region. Some follow a regional model and cover more than one community with communications and supports which work together to support seniors who may reside in remote areas that have few services. Throughout the Vancouver Island, several First Nations communities both on and off reserve receive services. Close relationships with First Nations Health Authorities have proven invaluable.

The **Better at Home** programs listed will be of tremendous support moving forward and can provide advice on program development and resources. 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 a **Community of Practice** (COP) which are sessions who formally meet two to three times per year serving all programs in British Columbia; however, with COVID-19 they met more regularly as the needs of communities changed and evolved. There are two COPs on Vancouver Island. Ucluelet and Tofino will be invited to join a COP closest to their region.

Lead 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) on Vancouver Island is Terry Harrison. terryh@uwbc.ca

Emergency Response

Safe Seniors Strong Communities (SSSC) COVID-19 Response

Emergency COVID-19 Response Plan in partnership with United Way and bc211

Funded by the Ministry of Health

- Easy access to services through bc211, now province-wide
- Seniors connected to local community volunteers, friends, neighbors
- Added supports and expanded services specific to COVID-19 needs
- Expansion of United Way's Better at Home Services
- Funding of community agencies and programs through United Way

As of the time of writing 866,924 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;

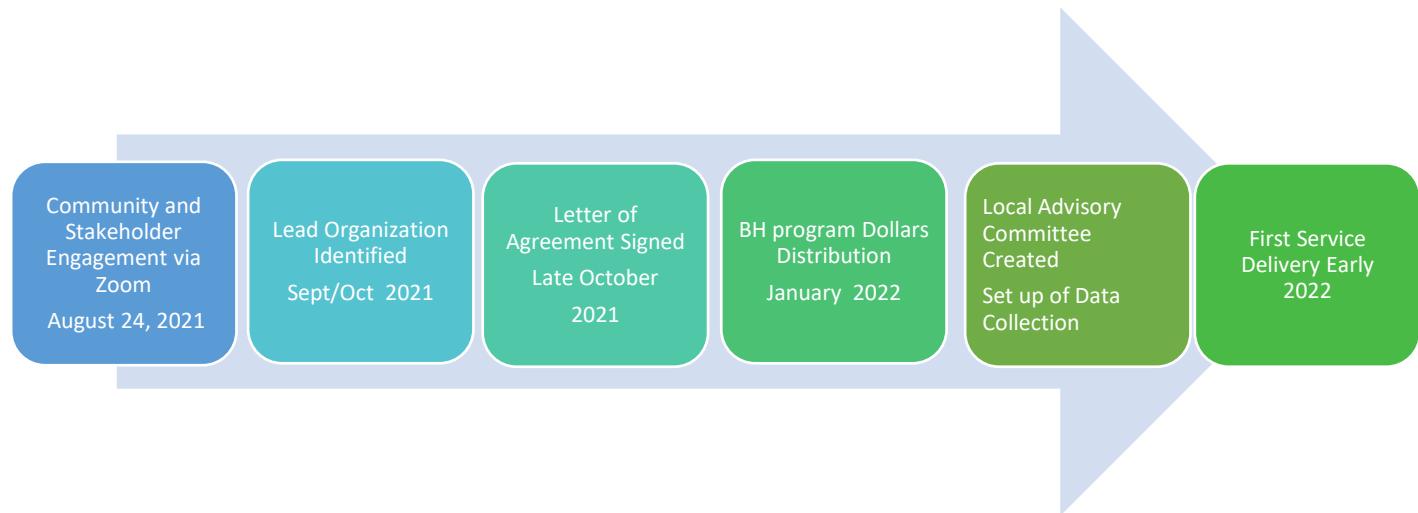
- UWBC Program Funds budget,
- and a Total Program Funds budget.

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 Ucluelet & Tofino

An ideal timeline was suggested for the **Ucluelet & Tofino BH** program be:

- September/October a Lead Organization be identified for Ucluelet & Tofino
- Late October, Early November 2021 the Lead organizations to fulfill and meet all application and grant criteria
- A signed Letter of Agreement for dispersal of funds be for January 2021
- A Program Coordinator be employed in time to participate in the Provincial Better at Home Communities online COPs by February 2022
- At least one BH service be delivered to seniors no later than February 28th, 2021

The UWBC Healthy Aging program team shared their experiences with the presenters and tried to affirm concerns by explaining the current dynamics of the program throughout the province and reflecting the needs of communities particularly during COVID-19 including the current landscape of successful BH Programs.

Recommendations from Regional Community Developer, Provincial Community Planner, Better at Home:

Following the Community Consultation, and subsequent conversations with various stakeholders, our **recommendation is to offer the Better at Home program to the [Pacific Rim Hospice Society](#).**

The Pacific Rim Hospice Society was one of the agencies whose name was put forward by a *coalition of community stakeholders. The Hospice participated in the Better at Home Community Consultation on August 24th, 2021, and they made a presentation to the group. One of the things that caught our attention was the fact that they currently provide several services to their Hospice clients (friendly visiting for older adults, walking groups and other Seniors-centered programming), which they could adapt and extend to Better at Home participants.

We've had follow-up conversations with the Hospice Society since the Community Consultation in August. During this time, they've revisited their strategic plan and assessed the impact that running a Better at Home program would have on their organization, and they feel confident in their ability to take on this responsibility. In an email dated Oct 13, 2021, the Executive Director, Tarni Jacobson, wrote, *"The Pacific Rim Hospice Society's board of directors met last night and unanimously supported our organization leading the Better at Home Program on the West Coast, if we are given the opportunity."*

Pacific Rim Hospice Society is a registered Canadian charity operating since 1994. They serve remote communities on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, a large geographic area of almost 350,000 hectares where approximately 6,500 residents reside. Their region encompasses five First Nation's territories, two municipalities, the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District and seven discrete communities –including Tofino and Ucluelet, the two main population centres.

Note: The [West Coast Community Resource Society](#) (WCCRS) was another agency who has the support of the community. We followed up with WCCRS and while they are very much in support of having a Better at Home

program in the region, the current Executive Director is acting in an interim basis until a permanent ED is hired, and so they'd "prefer the organization be through this transition" before taking on this kind of responsibility.

It's *possible* that Pacific Rim Hospice Society could form some sort of partnership with WCCRS in the future, as both parties are open to the idea of partnership.

**The West Coast Seniors Network is a coalition of community agencies that serve people who live in Ucluelet up to Tofino, and the places in between. This coalition, facilitated by Ursula Banke, did a great deal of advance work, identifying the need for Better at Home program in the region, collecting letters of support and identifying three agencies that they felt were a good fit for Better at Home. Pacific Rim Hospice Society and West Coast Community Resource Centre were on that list (as was Coastal Family Resources Coalition, who opted out).*

Why Pacific Rim Hospice 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 lead agency candidate. An application will then be sent to the successful candidate and supports for the new program will commence upon approval from the Provincial Director, Government Relations & Programs of UWBC.

The Regional Community Developer and Better at Home Provincial Community Planner 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 **Ucluelet & Tofino** 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 **Terry Harrison**, RCD Vancouver & Gulf Islands, 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 attending the day with the desire to co-create a shared future that invests in our older adults to live independently in their own homes and remain connected to their communities. Thanks also for demonstrating humility, courage, grace and leadership to explore differences and uncover what could be the greatest asset and outcome of the session; in particular trusting the facilitation process and being supportive of working with complex challenges presented in our communities.

We look forward to the next steps.

Further feedback, comments or questions can be directed to:

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