

Services to Seniors Coalition – North Shore

Agenda

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

12:00 pm to 1:30 pm

Capilano Mall – Family Services Space

- 1. Welcome: Family Services**
- 2. Land Acknowledgement (1 minute)**

Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society acknowledges and honours that we live and work on the unceded and traditional territories of the Coastal Salish people, including St'at'imc, S?wxwú7mesh (Squamish), x?m??k??y??m (Musqueam) and s?l?ilw?ta?? (Tsleil-Waututh).

- 3. Introductions (5 minutes)**

Family Services – Laurie Kohl, Michele Varley, Julia Staub-French, Robin Rivers, Miriam, Janine

Lionsview Seniors Planning Society – Margaret Coates, Wallis Dixon, Barry Goodwin, Lindsay Macklin

North Shore Neighborhood House – Trisha Alsop

Alzheimer's society – Amelia Gillies

Comfort Keepers – Cherian Itty, Betty Wills

Parkgate Community Services – Ellen Clague, Zheni Gazdova

Keep Well Society - Mary

North Shore Community Resources – Sue Carabetta

North Vancouver City Library - Rakshanda Ansari

Hollyburn – Veronica

Impact, RCMP Community (Volunteer) – Kamilia Abadi

- 4. Presentation – introductions**

Introduction, Partnerships, and Overview: Julia

Executive Director, Julia Staub-French shared how Family Services of the North Shore founded the Community Hub at Capilano Mall. The Community Hub is a long-term space intended for volunteers to establish community; a place to create new things, or a space for everyone.

Co-Chairs

- Trish Alsop, *North Shore Neighbourhood House, and John Braithwaite Community Centre*
- Margaret Coates, *Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society*

About the Coalition

The **Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society** is the host agency for the Services to Seniors Coalition – North Shore. The Coalition has been operating since 1992 and is the planning table for issues facing seniors and services to seniors on the North Shore. The 50+ participating organizations and individuals represent a wide spectrum of service providers. We come together as the Coalition to network, plan services and supports strategically, and set priorities and target resources for collaborative action.

Contact the Coalition

C/o Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society
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Strategic plan: Laurie

Director of community and provincial programs, Laurie Kohl, shared information about the strategic plan. Located in several locations, Family Services strives to create care and connection within the community, where family is the foundation. Several services and programs respond to the needs of the population.

Thrive supports parents who feel isolated and alone. They offer resources, education, and a safe place to connect with people who understand parenthood. This program is offered 6 days/week and is overflowing with need from the community.

Counselling and support services are provided at low-cost through internships. Different languages and counselling styles are available to address a variety of issues including trauma, gender-based violence, grief, caregiving, etc....

The **Community Hub** is run by volunteers to support thousands of individuals, seniors, and families who require a helping hand. Currently, Community Hub volunteers run the Christmas Bureau, social calls to decrease social isolation, grocery, and clothing donations.

PROUD2BE gives parents, family members, and LGBTQ2S+ children and youth a safe place to talk about feelings and experiences and facilitates educational events.

Jessie's Legacy gives parents and professionals the tools to help children at risk of disordered eating. This is a provincial program intended to provide preventative online services including mental literacy resources and events to support parents.

Seniors and Caregivers Connect supports seniors and caregivers struggling with isolation, anxiety, depression, loss, life transitions, or abuse.

Programs & Services

More Information about Seniors and Caregivers: Robin

Robin informed us that the Seniors and Caregivers services at Family services all began with volunteers conducting social visits at hospitals and hospices. They also connected with people in their homes for 1:1 visits alongside providing family and friend support. When VCH took over and centralized social support within the hospitals, Family services pivoted to community support – many volunteers followed and have continued for over 20 years.

Volunteer Caring Connections for Seniors became a vital service for seniors during the pandemic. Family Services aimed to tackle social isolation with volunteers providing weekly phone calls. These calls were consistent and reliable to ensure a relationship developed between the senior and the volunteer.

Through **Caregivers Connect Programs**, Family Services provide free support, connections, resources, and referrals for family and friends caring for older adults living at home.

Caregivers Support Groups are available online and in person. Following the pandemic, many caregiver support groups stayed online to support the demanding schedules of caregivers. With that said, an in-person group at Parkgate met while their loved one's attended the Day Respite program.

Grief Support Groups are a free, 8-week long group that guide people as they process loss. Registration is done from January, April, and September. Counsellors facilitate groups with the support of volunteers. These groups have been a successful way for people to socially connect, many individuals maintaining connection outside of Family services with coffee catchups and art groups!

Program Statistics & Volunteers: Michelle

Michelle followed up by discussing the reach of their programs, serving 1,200 families and 400 seniors through the Christmas Bureau, grocery program, and Connect Days (receiving gently used clothing and groceries). The space allows Family Services to connect to people through coffee, cookies, and time for chats.

There are over 400 volunteers, ~90% of which are seniors. Volunteers answer doors, make phone calls, and provide 1:1 support. Importantly, volunteers help make decisions on next steps and future plans due to their knowledge about the community being served.

Senior volunteers: Janine and Miriam's Experiences as Volunteers

Janine has been volunteering for 6 years, providing grocery services, and supporting Connect Days. She continues volunteering because everyone is there for the same reason, she gets to meet nice people, and sit down for a coffee with likewise people. Janine gets to develop strong relationships with community members and learn about participants preferences to better support their needs.

Mariam continues volunteering because she gets a great deal out of being in her "happy place." Many of the volunteers are older and have experienced grief or loss, so volunteering at Family Services provides a new sense of purpose, or a "new place to hang our hats."

5. Discussion

Grocery Program & Collaboration during COVID: Julia and Annwen

Julia and Annwen discussed the importance of collaboration between organizations to continue "doing what we do, but together." Annwen reflected on how Silver Harbour was able to distribute food more effectively into the community using the social ties developed by Family Services. During the peak, 50/60 people per week were receiving meals in the community. The United Way social meals grant will provide more opportunity to bring people together with food.

Group discussion on creative ways to streamline referrals:

- The Community Hub is presented as a space for connection, food, and a place to play. This provides opportunity to subtly assess community members to address issues including gender-based violence, mental illness, and dementia.
- The Seniors Working Group promotes collaboration and ensures there is limited duplication of services. Margaret posed questions including:
 - How can we use the space to build community and services together?
 - How can we collaborate by using this space?
- Camila posed questions for discussion:
 - How do we keep track of all the services? How can we streamline transitions where community members don't need to explain or repeat their stories?
- This conversation was flagged as something in need for further discussion - troubleshooting ways to pass referrals between organizations.

6. Tour of the facility**7. Next meeting: June 18, 2024, Speakers to be announced.**