

Kate Eldred

June 16, 2020

Programming COVID Confab #3: Creating Safe Return for Seniors

On Monday, June 15th, 2020, our Summer Student Kate attended the Webinar *Programming COVID Confab #3: Creating Safe Return for Seniors*, hosted by BC Parks and Recreation. The speakers included Jacklyn Altamura from Century House at the City of New Westminster, Sonja Pickering the Community Facilities Coordinator at the City of Richmond, and Jill Lawler from the Seniors Activity Center the City of West Vancouver.

The meeting focused on implementing virtual programming for seniors and soft launching in-person seniors programming. Each speaker gave a summary of what their organizations were doing regarding seniors programming both virtually and their plans to re-introduce some in-person activities. Common topics included the limited capacity of in-person programming, the need for a hybrid approach between both in-person and virtual programming, and discussions around how to engage vulnerable seniors. All discussions had a strong emphasis on working to implement safety protocols and engaging with local health authorities to guide re-opening.

There is considerable hesitancy re-opening seniors programming, yet there is also urgency to accommodate the social well-being of many seniors who are isolating due to Covid-19. The meeting addresses these concerns and, all speakers hope to re-introduce programming safely and appropriately in varying capacities and timelines.