



**North Shore
Community Resources**

Connecting You to Community Services!

E-MAILED
Sep. 8/09

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September 8, 2009

Mayor Pamela Goldsmith-Jones and
Members of Council
750-17th Street
West Vancouver, BC V7V 3T3
pgoldsmith-jones@westvancouver.ca

Dear Mayor Pamela Goldsmith-Jones and Members of Council,

By now you are aware of Vancouver Coastal Health Region's cuts to North Shore senior's services. Our agency received a 100% funding reduction (\$51,000) to our Seniors' One Stop Information and Referral Program, which has been in existence since 1992.

This program is an important part of infrastructure in that it benefits all existing North Shore seniors' programming, receiving 3000 calls per year from clients and 2000 from other individuals and agencies seeking assistance for their own client base. Through such information and referral services, seniors are able to maintain their independence while the Province can reduce the cost of acute care.

While we understand the economic predicament faced by our Provincial Government, and the pressures on our Health Region please consider the following:

1. We question the decision making process involved in choosing which programs were to be eliminated or to receive reduced funding. The Seniors' Coalition, which serves as a senior's planning table for the three North Shore communities, would have been the logical consultation point for Vancouver Coastal Health in determining a community strategy that impacts seniors the least.
2. We would like an explanation as to the rationale behind the elimination of the primary seniors information and referral source for all North Shore clients, area professionals and agencies. We are worried that these were

financial decisions made without careful consideration of impact upon the community, programs and clients served.

3. We are concerned regarding the timing of these funding cuts, 90 days notice being sent during the summer months when staff were on vacation and boards were in recess, delaying the opportunity for a response and strategies regarding the impact to clients and staff.
4. Vancouver Coastal Health, in their 2009 Community Health Profile, states "Over the next 20 years there will be an estimated increase of 56% in the 65+ population...This increase in the North Shore senior's population will mean an increase in demand of acute care, institutional care, home support, mental health resources as well as other social and community services." In light of this observation we are asking for a balanced approach in funding distribution that includes information and referral services, an important aspect of prevention, which will save funds required for expensive remedial interventions.
5. 5000 calls per year, and the follow up work related to these calls, will be referred back to an already overburdened health system.

The Seniors' One Stop Information Program has served residents of your constituency for nearly 18 years. Please help us in developing an alternative plan which utilizes a logical community approach to determining the most effective method of implementing proposed funding reductions. We are asking you to contact anyone you know who would be able to assist us in asking for a review of these funding cuts.

Please note we have also received word of a 100% funding cut (\$42,143) to our Volunteer Access (Mental Health) Program which assists North Shore residents with mental illness to participate in meaningful volunteer work in the community. When we assess the impact to these clients we will be contacting you with further information.

Yours truly,



Greg Shea, President
North Shore Community Resources Society



Li Boesen
Executive Director

cc:

Gordon Campbell, Premier of British Columbia
Hon. Kevin Falcon, Minister of Health Services
Jane Thornthwaite, MLA North Vancouver-Seymour
Ralpth Sultan, MLA West Vancouver-Capilano
Joan McIntyre, MLA West Vancouver-Sea to Sky
Hon. Ida Chong, MLA Oak Bay-Gordon Head
Darrell Mussatto, City of North Vancouver, Mayor
Richard Walton, District of North , Mayor
Rizwan Dhamji, Director, Senior's Program North Shore, VCH
Maureen Whyte, COO, Vancouver Community, VCH
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