



HOMELESSNESS ACTION WEEK 2015 FINAL REPORT



I. Introduction & Overview

This year marked the tenth annual Homelessness Action Week (HAW) which took place in municipalities across Metro Vancouver during the week of October 12th, 2015. The North Shore Homelessness Task Force (NSHTF) coordinated HAW events for the District of North Vancouver, City of North Vancouver and District of West Vancouver with a goal to provide services to homeless and those at-risk while bringing public awareness and understanding to the issues.

We extend our warmest thanks to the many volunteers, partners, local businesses and individuals who donated money, services, food and products making HAW events possible. Special thanks also goes to the 2015 HAW Planning Committee (members from the Council of Community Homelessness Tables), who came up with this year's regional theme "Can You See Me". The planning committee provided templates for posters, distributed a media release, and council proclamations for HAW.

II. North Shore Activities & Outcomes

The North Shore Homelessness Task Force (NSHTF), working in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health and many local community organizations, coordinated a week of activities for homeless and those at risk of homelessness. There were opportunities for the public to get involved by donating, volunteering and attending events. In turn, this helped to raise public awareness about homelessness on the North Shore.

Here are some additional initiatives taken on by the NSHTF during HAW:

- Media outreach to the North Shore news resulted in an article and photo published, along with another photo from Connect Day that was published following the event. The article resulted in inquiries from the public, including a young local musician, Mike Bertini, who will be releasing a song and video about a homeless man, and doing a fundraiser with proceeds going to the Lookout Society. Additionally, a church group inquired about hosting a weekly meal, follow-up on that initiative continues.
- The NSHTF website, www.northshorehomelessness.org, was updated regularly and leveraged to communicate the events and volunteer opportunities. Traffic to the site doubled during this time frame.
- Twitter @nshomelessness was updated regularly to 490 followers, up from 400 this same time last year.
- Many community organizations and volunteers helped to spread the word about North Shore events. These efforts helped to ensure client participation in events, as well as to attract local business and sponsors, donors, and volunteers.
- Over 30 people volunteered for North Shore Connect Day and the Street Soccer game. And this year, we had our youngest ever volunteer! Carson and his Mom Teresa helped to pick up sock and toiletry donations and to assemble comfort kits (see photo above).
- A different focus was taken for the annual Council delegations. Rather than updating Councils on NSHTF and HAW activities, the focus was put on housing and explaining the new Federal Government's Housing First funding model and implications on North Shore homeless/at-risk individuals. Council delegations at all three North Shore municipalities will follow HAW this year.

III. North Shore HAW Events:

Kicking off on October 12th and running through October 18th, HAW included the following events:

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12 - Thanksgiving Dinner at the Lookout Shelter, 5:00PM

A community Thanksgiving meal was hosted by the Lookout Shelter.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13 - Community Dinner, North Lonsdale United Church, 5:30PM

A community dinner was served in cooperation with Sharing Abundance, at the North Lonsdale United Church to 90 people.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14 - Youth Safe House Dinner, Youth Safe House, 5:00PM

Eight youth enjoyed a dinner at the Youth Safe House. A public health nurse was also planned, but unfortunately had to cancel at the last minute.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15 - North Shore Connect Day, John Braithwaite Community Centre, 9:00AM – 2:30PM

Connect Day, the largest event during HAW, was held again at John Braithwaite Community Centre in Lower Lonsdale. Hosted in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health, community organizations and local businesses, the event provided a welcoming setting for meals, healthcare and a variety of other outreach services. Additionally, a free bus service, staffed by outreach workers, was operating with the goal to get more street homeless to the event.

We warmly thank the many Connect Day volunteers, donors and community partners. New this year, participants enjoyed healthy 'Love Crunch' granola bars thanks to Nature's Path Foods, and helpful financial information and cozy hats from Vancity. Additionally, participants accessed free tax help thanks to H&R Block. 150 Hygiene kits were distributed thanks to donations from SPARC BC and London Drugs, and many smiles were seen after receiving haircuts by Zazou Salon's fabulous stylists. A delicious lunch was provided by the North Shore Salvation Army, breakfast was donated by Guli Madatali. For the full list of donors and partners, please see below.

Vancouver Coastal Health reported that a total of 259 people accessed health services, which is an increase over past years. Based on lunch attendance numbers, (lunch vouchers were issued at the entrance to the gym area and collected at lunch), 142 lunches were served (not including Vancouver Coastal Health/service organization staff and volunteers). For full statistics and information, please see Appendix A.

The following changes were implemented this year at Connect Day:

- Client intake forms were not required for entry to the event. In past years, the intake forms were required for the government funding and were filled in as participants entered the gym. However, as the event is no longer funded by the government, it was decided to discontinue the use of the forms which were deemed to be quite invasive to the clients. Several past clients commented that they appreciated not having to fill in the form anymore.
- Another change was to issue 'invitation' lunch tickets which were given out as people entered the gym. This decision was suggested by Salvation Army based on last year's challenge with running low on food. The invitations were collected at the lunch and were also used as a way to count people (since the intake forms were not used). While not as originally planned, the lunch was served line-up style instead of table service and it was noted that this seemed to improve flow, table and chair availability, and in general appeared to be less stressful to the participants than waiting for at the table meal service.
- For the first time this year, a Crystal Hearing testing van was scheduled to offer hearing tests at Connect Day. Unfortunately at the last minute this service had to be cancelled due to lack of required insurance for the location where they were going to park the van. The need for insurance wasn't known until the day before and therefore it was impossible to get this in time for the event, and the van had to be cancelled. It will be planned again for Connect 2016.
- Special thanks to the District of North Vancouver for loaning a number of long tables, and to the Lookout Society's moving company, a new social enterprise that helped to move the tables from the District to the venue and back at a discounted rate.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15 – Flicks and Forum, Ambleside Youth Centre, 7:00PM

An evening of film and discussion featuring "Something to Eat, A Place to Sleep, and Someone Who Gives a Damn". About 15 youth joined Youth Outreach Workers and Councillor Booth to watch this documentary and share their thoughts on the subject, including a blue-sky discussion that highlighted local issues and barriers faced by youth who are at risk of maintaining stable housing:

- The North Shore Youth Safe House is far away from West Vancouver schools
- A new Ambleside Youth Centre could include supported and affordable housing for West Vancouver youth and could be supported through an annual household levy
- This new model could involve bringing together the West Vancouver Community Foundation, faith-based communities, etc.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17 - Street Soccer Tournament, John Braithwaite Community Centre 1:00PM - 6:00PM

This year was the inaugural Harry Manson Legacy street soccer tournament in honor of the first First Nations to play professional soccer. A total of 4 teams played in the tournament. Thanks to Charles MacGregor, staff from the District of North Vancouver, and the volunteers who helped out at the event. A hot lasagna dinner, provided by Salvation Army, was served after the games to 60 people. For more information, team photos and more, please visit the website: <http://www.friendsofharrymanson.com/competing-for-the-cup.html/>.

IV. HAW Community Partners & Sponsors:

A very special thank you goes out to our community partners, sponsors and volunteers. Homelessness Action Week would not be possible without your support!

Al-Anon
BCIT Nursing
Canadian Mental Health Association
City of North Vancouver
District of North Vancouver
District of West Vancouver
Dr. Alnoon Somji Inc.
H&R Block Canada
Harvest Project
Hollyburn Family Services
John Braithwaite Community Centre
London Drugs
Lookout Society
Guli Madatali
MG Distributors

Nature's Path Foods
North Lonsdale United Church
North Shore Crisis Services Society
North Shore Multicultural Society
North Shore Neighbourhood House
North Shore Women's Centre
Salvation Army
Sharing Abundance
SPARC BC
Turning Point Recovery
Vancity
Vancouver Coastal Health
West Vancouver Youth Services
Windsor Secondary School
YWCA for WorkBC Employment Services Centre
Zazou Hair Salon



Appendix A:

Connect Day 2015 Services Attendance & Outcomes – Vancouver Coastal Health Services:



HAW NS CONNECT DAY – THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2015 @ JBCC				
Vancouver Coastal Health Services & Programs				
Service &/or Program	# Clients Served	M	F	Referrals to other services
BCIT Students Health Table: "Preventing/Managing Pin Worms & Tapeworms" (for client education & awareness)	30	Est 10	Est 20	Nothing reported.
BCIT Students: Diabetes (CanRisk)	45 (13 received CanRisk Screening)	16	29	Nothing reported.
Diabetes Education (Christie - Dietitian)	30	7	23	2 DEC @ West 2 NUT @ West
Foot Care Nurse & OT Foot/Leg Massage (Sandra, Tannis – VCC Instructors Emma, Rosemary)	RN 21 (2 RN FCP Instructors from VCC offered foot care treatment. Approx 24 clients received OT FC service – shoe liners, moulds, shoe fittings, foot ware adjustments etc.)	8	13	1 to NP @ HAW. 2 for FC f/up @ West
Foot Care Shoes & Sock Distribution "Free-for-all": Clients self serve. Maximum 2 pair per client.	2 tables of shoes & runners available. This format was well received. OT assisted fittings as required. 110 pairs of socks distributed.	n/a	n/a	Volunteer assisted to encourage 2 pair limit.
Nurse Practitioner (Sheila Turris)	6 (4 hours at event)	3	3	5 had GPs. 1 with no coverage did not want to pursue.
Public Health – Active Living (Margaret Broughton)	0 (1 hour at event)	0	0	No clients during hour. Visited other tables for collaboration.
Respiratory Therapist: Spirometry Testing	Not available.	n/a	n/a	n/a
Respiratory: Tobacco Cessation (Roopy Khatkar)	36 (3 for relative/friend) (3 hours at event)	21	15	33 to 811 & Quit Now
Stop HIV/Harm Reduction Vaccinations (Logan Chinski)	36 (HIV Tests: 7) Flu/Vaccine: 55 (some clients may have received service for both HIV & Flu/Vacc)	12	24	Nothing reported.
Vaccinations/Flu Shot (Monique Catala)	Flu/Vaccine: 55 (some clients may have received service for both HIV & Flu/Vacc)	20	35	2 referrals made – no comments to what service.
Vancouver Coastal Health Total Clients Served	259	97	162	(#s reflect clients who may have received multiple services)

Connect Day 2015 Services Attendance & Outcomes – Other Services:

#	Service/Organization	#	Service/Organization
30+	Lookout Society – housing, outreach	19	North Shore Multicultural Society
31 Adults + 1 child	NS Neighbourhood House/NV Rec.	87	NS Crisis Services Society – knitted hats, mittens, other items were distributed.
55	Haircuts - Zazou Salon	200	Harvest Project - Free food/goodie bags were distributed that contained: Tuna, Noodles, Candy, Apple, Water, gum
25	Turning Point Recovery		Canadian Mental Health Services Outreach <i>Numbers not supplied.</i>
118	Salvation Army – Clothing vouchers, outreach	100	Vancity - Information re: financial services/free accounts for seniors, etc. plus warm hats and other goodies.
10	Al-Anon	282 (Total meals served)	Meals Served: Breakfast: 100 Lunch: 142 clients (+ approx. 40 Connect Day volunteers and agency staff)
17	Tax Services – H&R Block	150	Comfort/hygiene kits distributed

For more information about the North Shore Homelessness Task Force, please visit www.northshorehomelessness.org.