



SOCIAL SERVICES IN RICHMOND

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Executive Summary

This document was prepared to provide City of Richmond Council, City Staff and Richmond residents with information about social services in Richmond and an overview of the agencies and organizations that provide these services. The information is of a "snapshot" nature as the services are constantly in transition during this time of funding uncertainty.

A survey of social service agencies was conducted in summer, 2003. The focus was on "public benefit organizations" (Canadian Council on Social Development, "Funding Matters Summary Report", 2003, p. 6) that exist primarily to serve others and contribute to the general welfare. There were 23 agencies eligible to receive the survey and 22 responded for a response rate of 96%.

Not-for-profit and voluntary agencies deliver a wide-range of services such as home care for the sick and elderly, programs for children and youth and the disabled, shelter for victims of abuse and assistance to immigrant families adjusting to a new country. A total of 91 separate programs for services were identified.

Thirty programs were identified where demand for social services could not be met as clients were turned away, placed on a waiting list, or both.

Almost one-half of the agencies providing social services to Richmond citizens experienced funding changes in 2003 and more than one-half anticipate further changes in 2004. Of most concern to the agencies was the pressure of uncertainty in funding and the necessity to adjust their primary goals to suit the perceived expectations of funding agencies.

Although more than \$21.4 million was spent in Richmond during the past year to provide these services, many of the agencies and organizations reported being stretched to the breaking point to continue to provide their services to Richmond citizens as funding methods change and senior governments continue to reduce core funding.

Based on meetings with the Steering Committee, discussions with agency representatives during follow up contact, comments taken from the surveys, research involving other jurisdictions and consultant observations, some suggestions the City might consider for its City Grants Program are:

- provide greater stability in funding for social service agencies by entering longer term agreements,
- continue to support operating expenses and infrastructure funding,
- remove "innovative approaches" as a principle of funding,
- remove need for evidence of funding from a variety of sources, and
- make it possible to apply electronically for the City Grants Program.

Process

This survey of social service agencies was conducted in June and July, 2003. A letter from the Mayor was sent to alert the agencies to the survey. The survey was then sent and responses from the agencies were accepted by regular mail, by facsimile or by email.

The not-for-profit agencies and organizations that contributed to this report were all registered not-for-profit societies and registered charities. There were 24 organizations on an original list provided by the City. Two additional agencies were recommended by those who received the survey, for a total of 26. Upon analysis of the surveys it was determined that one agency should not have received the survey, and two agencies on the original list were actually programs of other agencies. In the final analysis, there were 23 agencies eligible to receive the survey and 22 responded for a response rate of 96%.

Agencies

There were 23 agencies and organizations involved in this project and 22 responded to the request for information. The following agencies participated in this project.

Big Brothers of Greater Vancouver
Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland
Canadian Mental Health Association, Richmond Branch
Chimo Crisis Services
Developmental Disabilities Association
Family Services of Greater Vancouver
Heart of Richmond AIDS Society
Richmond Alcohol and Drug Action Team Society (RADAT)
Richmond Committee on Disability
Richmond Family Place Society
Richmond Food Bank Society
Richmond Hospice Association
Richmond Multicultural Concerns Society
Richmond Society for Community Living
Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society
Richmond Women's Resource Centre Association
Richmond Youth Service Agency Society
Salvation Army Resource Centre
Salvation Army Richmond House Emergency Shelter
SUCCESS Richmond Service Centre
Touchstone Family Association
Volunteer Richmond Information Services

Social Services

There were some 91 specific programs identified by the agencies who contributed to this project. However, individual programs often addressed multiple needs and targeted more than one client group. This will result in many more than 91 services being available overall.

The programs were categorized initially according to their primary goals and generally using the social service categories from the Richmond Community Services Directory (RCSD). Using this method, it was noted some categories were set up by target group and some by type of service. For example, using the RCSD yields both target groups such as children and youth and types of service such as counselling and support. An attempt was also made to categorize the programs using target group only. This method also fell somewhat short as there may be programs targeted to more than one group. For example, a program may be targeted to immigrant women. The following provides the categories and number of programs in each category using both methods.

PROGRAM CATEGORY	NUMBER OF PROGRAMS	TARGET GROUP	NUMBER OF PROGRAMS
Supportive Services/Child Care	3	Children (1-12 years of age)	3
Children and Youth	10	Youth (may include children in some cases)	14
Counselling and Support	19	Youth and adults	6
Food Support	6	Adults only	13
Family and Parenting	11	Families/Parents	12
Health and Safety	5	Seniors	3
Housing and Shelter	4	Women	16
Law and Justice	1	Men	1
Mental Health Services	3	Immigrants and refugees	5
Multicultural and Settlement	9	Volunteers	3
Services for Seniors	1	All target groups	15
Services for Special Needs	8		
Volunteering	5		
Women	6		
TOTAL PROGRAMS	91	TOTAL PROGRAMS	91

Forty of the 91 identified programs specifically mentioned offering the program in more than one language. Generally, the second language other than English was Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin) but other

languages mentioned were Arabic, Bulgarian, Czech, Dari, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Serbian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, Ukrainian and Urdu. The capacity to offer programs in different languages may rest with the skills of individual volunteers. Some programs may essentially not be available to some if the language needed is not available.

An attempt was made to identify the social service programs being offered to Richmond citizens according to whether they were primarily designed to offer prevention services (services designed to prevent actions that may lead to a requirement for social services, or assisting people with specific problems upon referral or personal initiative), intervention services (services designed to intervene after a specific problem has been identified and targeted to a specific group) or crisis services (services that respond to a particular crisis that may be temporary). The following identifies the number of programs in these service areas:

SERVICE AREA	NUMBER OF PROGRAMS
Prevention	43
Intervention	41
Crisis	7
TOTAL	91

OVERLAPS

Some analysis of whether there is overlap in social services among the agencies was considered important for this project. No overlaps emerged in the analysis. Because of the specialized nature of the agencies, the limits on budget, and the types of client groups being served, duplication in services would likely be quickly identified by the agencies themselves, or their clients. In several cases, agency programs were dropped from one agency as a result of provincial funding cuts but the specific program dropped was then picked up by another agency that received the funding from the provincial government.

Gaps

Social service agencies offering programs in Richmond were asked to identify programs where they were forced to turn clients away or where they may have a client waiting list. Agencies may have to turn clients away because of insufficient funding or insufficient staff resources. Regardless, turning clients away and also having a waiting list were considered indicators of demand for a service that could not be met. In

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some cases, clients may be turned away and no waiting list could be kept such as in emergency shelter facilities.

In some cases, demand was being met but agencies still had a client waiting list. In these cases, although the service was in demand, all clients requesting the service were being served. In this situation, the gap in service may be less severe. The following programs, with their target group, were identified where clients were turned away and/or there was a client waiting list.

PROGRAM NAME	AGENCY	TURN CLIENTS AWAY	WAIT LIST	TARGET GROUP
Employment Program	Richmond Youth Service Agency	Yes	Yes	Youth at risk, ages 15 to 30
Big Brothers Program	Big Brothers	No	Yes	Boys, 7 - 12
Let's Be Friends	Big Brothers	Yes	Yes	Boys, Chinese-speaking, 7-16
Adult Outpatient Counselling	RADAT	No	Yes	Adults
Hospice Volunteer Visiting Support Program	Richmond Hospice Association	Yes	Yes	Richmond residents facing life-threatening illness
Individual Bereavement Counselling	Richmond Hospice Association	Yes	Yes	Richmond residents who are bereaved
Family Support Program	Richmond Family Place Society	Yes	Yes	Parents in need of parenting support and education, many ESL and low income parents
Satellite Programs for East Richmond and Hamilton Family Place	Richmond Family Place Society	Yes	Not specified	Parents with children less than 5, many new immigrants and refugees
Incest Sexual Abuse Centre	Family Services of Greater Vancouver	Yes	Yes	Children 2 – 19, adults, families, non-offending care givers who have suffered sexual abuse or trauma
Nobody's Perfect	Family Services of Greater Vancouver	No	Yes	Isolated parents with children less than 5 years old
Community Action Plan for children	Touchstone	No	Yes	Families
Outreach	Heart of Richmond AIDS Society	Yes	Yes	Young people
Education/Prevention	Heart of Richmond AIDS Society	Yes	No	Young people
Nova Transition House	Chimo Crisis Services	Yes	No	Adult women and dependent children who have experienced abuse
Emergency Shelter for Men	Salvation Army Richmond House	Yes	No	Men 19+ who are homeless and referred by MHR
Supported Housing	Canadian Mental Health Association	Yes	Yes	Adults with history of mental illness
Crisis and Referral Line	Chimo	Yes	No	All ages and genders
Host Program	SUCCESS	No	Yes	New immigrants and refugees

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PROGRAM NAME	AGENCY	TURN CLIENTS AWAY	WAIT LIST	TARGET GROUP
Settlement and Adaptation Program	SUCCESS	Yes	No	New and old immigrants and refugees
Settlement Program for South Asia, East Europe and Philippines	Richmond Multicultural Concerns Society	No	Yes	Immigrants and refugees from South Asia, East Europe and Philippines
Community Kitchens	Family Services of Greater Vancouver	No	Yes	Immigrant women and their pre-school children
Volunteer Program to provide work experience and training	Richmond Women's Resource Centre	Yes	Yes	New immigrant women
Computer Training Program	Richmond Women's Resource Centre	No	Yes	Primarily new immigrant women
Richmond Senior Peer Counselling	Volunteer Richmond	No	Yes	Seniors
Therapeutic Horseback Riding for Children and Youth with Disabilities	Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society	Yes	Yes	Children with disabilities, 4 – 14 or less than 150 lbs.
Youth Connections After School Program	Richmond Society for Community Living	No	Yes	Children 6 – 19 with developmental disability
Disability Resource Centre	Richmond Committee on Disability	No	Yes	People all ages with disabilities
Day Services	Richmond Society for Community Living	No	Yes – Held by MCFD	Adults with developmental disability
Children and Adult Respite	Richmond Society for Community Living	No	Yes	Children and adults with developmental disabilities
Welfare Advocacy	Richmond Women's Resource Centre	Yes	Yes	Women and their families on social assistance

A review of the information on gaps revealed that most agencies (18 of the 22, or 82% of the reporting agencies) were experiencing some inability to meet the demand for their services. Target groups affected were almost all represented from children to families to new immigrants

With almost all reporting agencies identifying some gaps, it was difficult to suggest social service areas where there may be higher priority. An overview of the programs where there was both the need to turn clients away and a waiting list might suggest programs for children and youth, those for adults facing life-threatening illness or bereavement, programs for parents and women (immigrant and low income) and for adults with a history of mental illness to be at least four areas of pressing need.

The survey participants were also asked to identify major gaps in services from their perspective. The following is a list of the major gaps identified by the survey participants:

1. Family support (prevention) to families with children ages 6 – 12.
2. Emergency and short-term childminding.

3. Advocacy services on housing, legal, poverty and welfare issues.
4. HIV/AIDS area, particularly in education/prevention for young people.
5. Youth and women's shelter space.
6. Services for those with mental handicaps who do not meet the criteria set by the Ministry of Health.
7. Assisted living housing for people with disabilities.
8. Accessing information about reduced/changed services.
9. Services to the isolated, frail or elderly.
10. Free-standing hospice.
11. Support for caregivers.
12. Transportation for frail or elderly to medical appointments and other professional services.
13. Low cost housing.
14. Individual and family counselling and family support/prevention programs for the ethnic population.
15. Culturally appropriate service in the community.
16. Coordination of services.
17. Translation services for ESL people who need to access services.
18. More prevention and early intervention social services for youth.
19. City Strategy for Youth Services should be re-energized.
20. Services to individuals (and their families) that have a developmental disability.

Funding

Nine of the agencies providing social services to Richmond experienced funding changes in 2003. One reported an increase from donations but the other eight experienced losses, three from gaming funding cuts (Richmond Family Place Society, Volunteer Richmond and Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian) and two related to cutbacks from the Provincial government (Richmond Multicultural Concerns, Richmond Youth Service Agency). The other three did not specify reasons for the cuts but one mentioned increased costs as the main factor resulting in less funds being available for programs.

More than one-half (13) of the agencies anticipate changes in 2004 but two of these (Food Bank and Youth Service Agency) expect increases from donations and self-generated revenue through partnerships

respectively. Nine agencies expect decreases in funding and five of those agencies (RADAT, Richmond Society for Community Living, Big Sisters, Volunteer Richmond, and CMHA Richmond Branch), specifically expect decreases in funding because of gaming cuts or cuts from the Province. Volunteer Richmond expects gaming fund decreases to affect its Information & Referral Service and Volunteer Centre and the Richmond Christmas Fund. Heart of Richmond AIDS Society, also among the nine agencies expecting decreases, expect funding previously obtained from the Centre for Disease Control will not be available.

Of most concern to the agencies, and consistent with concerns identified in the "Funding Matters" report, many agencies are experiencing the pressure of uncertainty in funding and the necessity to adjust their primary goals to suit the perceived expectations of funding agencies.

Most funders will not support agency administration with the result that many not-for-profit agencies may be losing their basic infrastructure and capacity.

Some agencies reported frustration from the current funding realities that seem to promote competition for funding among agencies. Although most agencies would support the need for accountability in funding, they find the pressure to obtain funds and the need to compete with other agencies for funding, is taking time away from the capacity to fulfill their primary mission and goals.

The agencies reported funding overall of some \$38.7 million, with \$21.4 million, or 55% allocated for Richmond. Because of the nature of social services, it may be difficult for agencies to restrict their services to Richmond citizens only, but sixteen of the agencies reported 75% or more of their entire budget was allocated to Richmond. The agencies reporting 75% or more of their budget was allocated to Richmond are: CMHA Richmond Branch, Chimo Crisis Services, Heart of Richmond AIDS Society, RADAT, Richmond Committee on Disability, Richmond Family Place Society, Richmond Food Bank Society, Richmond Hospice Association, Richmond Multicultural Concerns Society, Richmond Society for Community Living, Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society, Richmond Women's Resource Centre Association, Richmond Youth Service Agency Society, Salvation Army Resource Centre, SUCCESS, and Volunteer Richmond Information Services.

Despite provincial funding cutbacks, 73% of all social service agency funding in Richmond still comes from the Provincial government. However, some agencies do not receive any funding from the province. The following agencies reported that they received no money from the Province in their last fiscal year:

Richmond Committee on Disability (Disability Resource Centre Program)
Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society
Richmond Food Bank Society

Government funding of social services comes mainly from Provincial coffers but a few agencies are eligible for national program support. The Richmond Committee on Disability attributed 11% of their budget to the Federal government, the Women's Resource Centre, 19% and Touchstone Family Association, 18%. Richmond Youth Services reported receiving 15% of their budget from Federal sources.

Municipal funding was an important source but represents less than 2% of the overall funds being expended in Richmond for social services. Thirteen of the 22 agencies indicated they received municipal funding during the last fiscal year. The Richmond Committee on Disability received 28% of its funding from the municipality and Heart of Richmond AIDS Society received 21% of its funding from there. However, the Heart of Richmond AIDS Society was described as an unusual situation and a good example of the funding instability being experienced by these agencies. Heart of Richmond AIDS Society received their municipal funding in response to an emergency request. Typically, 3% or less of their funding may come from municipal sources. The Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society received 13% of its funding from the municipality, RADAT received 8% but others receiving funding from the municipality received 6% or less of their funding from this source.

Public donations comprise almost the entire budget for the Richmond Food Bank Society (98% from donations) but most agencies receive only a small portion of their funding from donations and one or two percent is common. One agency, the Salvation Army Resource Centre, reported 52% of their budget from donations and the Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society obtained 28% of their total budget from donations. Volunteer Richmond and Big Sisters reported 15% and 14% respectively.

Consistent with the general pattern of most social service agencies in most jurisdictions, few rely on fees for service. In many cases, the clientele of social service agencies cannot afford to pay. Significant among the agencies reporting was SUCCESS where just over one-half (53%) of their budget was from fees for service. The Salvation Army Resource Centre reported 43% from fees and the Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society reported 8% of their total budget comes from fees.

While reliance on Gaming funds may have increased in importance on a collective scale, some agencies reported that gaining access to these funds has become increasingly difficult as the rules change, funding

criteria become narrower and competition for funding increases. Some are unsuccessful in obtaining gaming funds and many find the application process to be cumbersome and daunting. Thirteen of the 22 responding agencies received funds from Gaming in 2003. One-half (50%) of the funding for Heart of Richmond AIDS Society was obtained from Gaming. The Women's Resource Centre received 32% of their funding from Gaming, Big Sisters 25% and the Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society received 20% of their budget from Gaming.

Eleven of the agencies received a portion of their funding from United Way. Big Sisters, at 14%, received the highest portion of their funding from the United Way. Richmond Family Place Society received 13% but most agencies receiving funding from the United Way received 5% or less of their funding from this source.

Although some agencies reported receiving funding from various financial institutions, no agency received more than 2% of their overall funding from this source.

Foundations are also in the social service funding arena. Richmond Family Place Society reported receiving 18% of their budget from Foundations, the Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society received 15% and the Richmond Committee on Disability received 14% of their funding from this source. Most other agencies receiving funding from Foundations reported receiving 5% or less of their funding this way.

Suggestions

The City of Richmond has a vision "to be the most appealing, liveable, and well-managed community in Canada" and the City has demonstrated a tradition of inclusiveness, looking for ways to support those with special needs within the community. Under the City's sustainable community strategy "communities and social services networks and programs" are identified as one component to enhance Richmond's liveability.

The City of Richmond is one of three Lower Mainland municipalities recently taking some initiative on the issue of provision of social services to their citizens. The City of Vancouver is reviewing its Community Services Grants Program and the City of North Vancouver is studying changing social issues in the community, promoting coordinated delivery and attempting to ensure the City's grant programs are fair, efficient and effective. These Lower Mainland municipalities are carrying out activities consistent with a national trend to analyze the impact of the changing funding climate on social service agencies.

Comments from the agencies (see Attachments) were solicited and some suggestions from these comments are identified here for consideration by City Council, the RCSAC, and City Staff.

There was some support for having City Staff visit program sites to view them first hand and meet with agency representatives and Boards of Directors. There was also support for face-to-face agency reports on social service activities given to Council or a Council Committee.

Many agencies identified the responsibility for improving understanding of social services with the Richmond public as being a shared responsibility among the agencies, the RCSAC, City Staff and City Council. Agencies commented on the need for continual communication among the agencies themselves about what they do and how they could work together. Agencies indicated that this coordination and communication role should be performed by the RCSAC. Some agencies supported the RCSAC becoming more proactive in its role to hold regular meetings and information sessions accessible to the agencies, City Staff and City Council. The RCSAC may encourage networking, identify emerging issues, regularly assess social services issues and needs and promote cooperation and collaboration.

Working more closely together was identified by some as a difficult task particularly during this current climate of "survival and competition".

It was suggested this type of inventory should be done for all other agencies, cultural, health and others, thus identifying the range of services being provided to Richmond citizens by not-for-profit societies.

Based on meetings with the Steering Committee, discussions with agency representatives during follow up contact, comments taken from the surveys, research involving other jurisdictions and consultant observations, some suggestions the City might consider for its City Grants Program were offered such as:

1. Provide a greater amount of stability in funding for social service agencies by entering longer term agreements that extend beyond one year to a maximum of three years.
2. Continue to support, particularly for agencies where the majority of their budget is devoted to Richmond citizens, operating expenses and infrastructure funding.
3. Remove the need to provide "innovative approaches" as a principle of funding.

4. Remove the requirement from Richmond City Grants Policy to, "provide evidence of having sought funding from a variety of sources".
5. Make it possible to apply for the City Grants Program by electronic means and eliminate the need to provide an original plus three copies.

Attachments

Letter from the Mayor
The Survey
Comments Received
Table of Programs



This report was prepared in consultation with the Richmond Community Services Advisory Council and The City of Richmond by Don Cameron Associates. The report was based on information provided by the social service agencies and no attempt to verify the information received was made.