



PROGRESSIVE HOUSING SOCIETY



2015- 2016
Annual Report





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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To empower individuals to be engaged with the community and achieve personal independence by providing access to resources and life skills

OUR PROGRAMS

The **Supported Independent Living (SIL)** program provides one-on-one support and rent subsidies to individuals with severe and persistent mental illnesses. This program is designed to provide the skills training and support necessary to successfully maintain an independent lifestyle, with clients scheduling regular meetings with support workers to stay on track with their goals.

Burnaby Outreach and Housing Hub (BHOH) provides direct, on-site support for individuals facing homelessness in the Burnaby area. Individuals have access to basic necessities as well as life skills coaching, referrals to community services, and support in finding and securing housing. The BHOH also incorporates an on-site medical clinic.

The **Shared and Transitional Housing** program is designed to provide personal support to individuals with severe and persistent mental illnesses and assist them in developing the skills needed to live independently. Clients in this program live collaboratively in one of our three houses across Burnaby, creating a homey, nurturing, and positive living environment with support from CLS staff.

YEAR IN REVIEW

Held at Deer Lake Park during Mental Health Awareness Week, this 3rd annual walk was a collaborative effort with other local mental health services

WALK FOR MENTAL HEALTH

APR 2015

FUNDRAISER

Held at the Paddlewheeler to raise money for outreach and mental health



The Holly, Rumble, and Georgia houses got a well-deserved makeover including landscaping for a homier feel

REVAMPING THE SHARED HOUSES

Both homeless outreach and mental health programs said a big thank you to their clients with a Disney themed BBQ!

SUMMER CLIENT BBQ'S



AGM 2014

Celebrating last year's successes and recognizing our amazing staff and volunteers





With support from our community sponsors our clients enjoyed a Christmas meal and a visit from Santa



Alongside the Burnaby Task Force on Homelessness, the PHS team volunteered throughout the week and co-hosted the Homeless Connect event

PROGRAM CHRISTMAS PARTIES

HOMELESSNESS ACTION WEEK

MAR 2016

HOMELESSNESS PARTNERING STRATEGY FUNDING

FIT CLUB

Many clients and staff participate in weekly walks accompanied by healthy snacks. To demonstrate the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Thanks to this substantial federal government grant, our BHOH program has been able to make an even bigger impact in helping and housing individuals facing homelessness in Burnaby



PHS

Written by Alessia Guidi

Progressive Housing Society helps a wide range of clients through our many programs. The Burnaby Housing and Outreach program began in 2014 and has changed the lives of many. Finding housing for those who have been homeless and giving them access to programs and techniques has helped them regain control of their life. The greatest part about being a part of Progressive Housing Society is knowing the impact each worker has on their clients.

I had the pleasure of speaking with Gord, a client from our Housing and Outreach program. Gord like many others experienced hard times in life. He went from having a family back in Ontario to suddenly being alone on the West Coast. He was vulnerable and susceptible to a lifestyle that was far from what he left. Soon he found himself homeless and in need of support. At first, he did not accept help as he felt he could manage getting back on his feet.

However, the outreach staff was always there for him even when he did not want direct services. They were always there reminding him that help is available whenever he wanted it. Finally Gord decided it was time to seek help and turn his life around. Progressive was able to find him an apartment and he is no longer homeless.

What struck me most about Gord is that he is a man of few words. However when speaking about William, Anita and Steven, he appeared uplifted and chatty; he suddenly could not stop speaking about how amazing the outreach staff has been. It is clear they are not just support workers to him but are more like family. Gord is only a single story, there are so many others whose lives have been changed and touched by Progressive's programs. We look forward to continuing this life changing work to those in our Burnaby and New Westminster community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



IRFAN ALI, President

Irfan is passionate about housing and firmly believes in giving back to the community. Ultimately, Irfan hopes to increase the accessibility of safe and affordable homes for all persons struggling with mental illness and homeless in Burnaby.



JAYE TREIT, Executive Director

Jaye comes to PHS with over 17 years of experience in the health, education, and social service sectors and has significant experience in community-based programming.



ALICE SUNDBERG, Vice President

Alice is a housing and community development consultant and has been involved in social housing advocacy, education, and development since 1991. She hopes to help the PHS board with governance issues and developing more affordable housing for low income folks in Burnaby.



GARTH EVANS, Director at Large

Garth practices law with the Vancouver firm Barbeau, Evans & Goldstein. He acts for a number of non-profit housing societies and has experience respecting legal matters involving housing and homelessness issues. He was formerly a Burnaby City Councillor.



ADITI RUDRA, Secretary (Interim)

Currently majoring in Business Management and Marketing Management, and minoring in Public Relations. Aditi plans to make non-profit work an integral part of her career. Aditi is committed to spreading awareness about homelessness and the



KAYHAN MIRFAKHRAI, Director

Kayhan has a Bachelor and a Master of Science degree in Industrial Engineering. He has served on four different Boards in Professional non-for Profit organizations and has been the president of one of them for about 15 years. He loves to serve the community and help the under-privileged.



SONIA HALL,, Director

Building on a lifelong commitment to promote social justice, Sonia joined the PHS Board to help raise awareness about the need for good quality, safe, affordable housing as a social determinant of community health.



RACQUEL NELSON, Director

Racquel believes in collaborating to develop relationships to advocate and create opportunities to meet the needs and interests of residents in the community. Since graduating with a degree in social work, she has worked in several social housing communities in Toronto and Vancouver.



MARIA ASUNCION, PPAC Rep

Maria has lived in Burnaby for over 20 years and brings over a decade of experience in the software industry. PHS has been a blessing to her, and she enjoys volunteering as well as establishing new relationships within the community.



KATHLEEN PERRIERA, Director

Kathleen was involved in the opening of the Revival Center and volunteered there for 15 years until it closed its doors. Since coming to BC from Ontario she has been involved for various causes within her community." It is with personal satisfaction to give back and help people."

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Irfan Ali and Jaye Treit

The year of 2015 was a year of transition and change, in our staffing complement as well as our program development. We have welcomed and said goodbye to some staff as well as program participants and have also had to learn how to do our work a bit differently. Anytime there is change, individuals and organizations are challenged to develop new competencies and capabilities. The only way an organization will be successful in implementing changes is through the practice and work of the people who are making the change happen. For the past 30 years, Progressive Housing Society has been a leader in supporting some of the most vulnerable individuals in Burnaby. We have focused our practice on solid client-centered models in all of our program areas. When a need is not being met, our staff seek creative solutions and always go the extra mile to facilitate positive changes. Our management style allows for flexibility and forward thinking and at times, we even take risks when we believe it is what is for the best interest of our membership. This past year has been no different. We were once again challenged by our funders and our clients to deliver services in a new way and to bridge gaps that we knew existed and required additional resources. Our goal was to provide a one stop access to a variety of support services and housing assistance for our Outreach clients, through strengthening our community partnerships and collaboration with our stakeholders, funders and community service providers. We have re-organized and re-structured some of the programs and as with anything new, will continue to modify and build using lessons learned.

Clients have been very patient with us this past year during our growing pains. Staff have been as committed as ever and have responded to our changes without resistance. I want to first thank Linda Kingston for stepping in and providing leadership to the organization for the past year and keeping the ship a float. In addition, multiple staff contributed to sustaining operations during Jaye's absence. I would like to especially thank Jesse Donaldson, for his support and supervision for the SIL program and Pindi Gill for her dedication to ensuring our financial responsibilities are met and our budgets are being followed. I would like to thank our partners and funders and all levels of government for continuing to support affordable housing and recognizing the need to maintain services for those who have complex needs in Burnaby.

The Board of Directors is absolutely committed to the Society. Through the work of various committees, the Directors demonstrate their desire to support and provide the necessary leadership to advocate for improved accessibility to housing and services to Burnaby citizens. We would like to thank our outgoing Board member, Carrie McLaren, for fulfilling 6 full years of service with PHS. She has served as Director, Secretary and Treasurer and has been a key leader on our Executive Committee. We are truly grateful for her dedication and commitment to service.

SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING REPORT

Linda Kingston

Recovery is not about finding a miracle cure or returning to how things used to be. It's about finding a happier, healthier, more sustainable life that recognizes the past, accepts the limitations of the present and is full of hope for the future

-Simon Heyes

The main focus of the SIL Program is to offer a full range of support serves to assist people affected by mental illness to learn or re-learn the skills to live independently. While they are actively engaged in the support program a rental subsidy is provided to make the rent affordable.

SIL participants continue to try new opportunities to promote their own recovery. The goals that people are challenging themselves with are varied and interesting. Kudos for all for your hard work. This variety challenges the SIL staff to continue to be innovative and creative in assisting people to achieve their goals. It is their support to the participants that makes the program successful.

Thank-you to Freddy Benmergui, Luba Andrews, Sandra Warren, Jesse Donaldson, Gloria Rogers, Andi Hale, Norm Gray, Greg Bourgeois and Kayla Clack for all of their dedicated and resourceful work this year.

The SIL Program continues to be challenged by the pressures of the housing market. Ever increasing rents in Burnaby and the shortage of available housing stock is an on-going concern. For the future we will have to look to creative solutions to provide new affordable housing options.

SHARED & TRANSITIONAL HOUSING REPORT

Leanne Chatwin

In the Community Living Support Program we have one transition home in Burnaby with private rooms and shared facilities. Each individual living in the homes receives one on one support on a constant basis. The length of stay is time limited, usually six months to two years, while the individual engages in rehabilitation activities with the intention of transitioning to a less supported environment.

The Community Support Program also have two group homes in Burnaby offering opportunities for supported independent living with additional support by staff. This is also a time limited program but longer stays are considered as support is needed.

Each program is designed to assist clients to become independent while encouraging a healthy way of life. Some of the programs that have been introduced are Health group, focusing on nutrition and diet while making all natural and nutritious meals as a group, as well as discussion groups to work through conflicts and concerns or just to discuss topics of interest. Both programs empower individuals to learn new skills while engaging in rehabilitation activities with the intention of transitioning to a less supportive environment.



BURNABY HOUSING & OUTREACH HUB REPORT

William Oksanen

The program focuses on people sleeping outside using a Housing First approach that not only makes housing a first priority, but supports clients while they are housed, is key to program success. A challenge throughout the year has been responding to the demand from the community for housing assistance, including self-referrals, referrals from community agencies, park staff and business improvement associations. Outreach client prioritization criteria included, length of homelessness combined with vulnerability indexing. This system of prioritization insures that the most habitually homeless, and most vulnerable people are receiving services from us.

Finding housing is only the first step for our clients to ensure that their chance of future homelessness is reduced. The outreach team is diligent in its follow up with clients who have been housed through weekly and monthly visits. Our team addresses concerns around budgeting, mental health alcohol and drug use. Our staff also assists with vocational and educational aspirations, life skills training as well as social and community relations. We will be continuing our weekly nurse practitioner and will include weekly dental clinic for our clients in the upcoming year.

Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that clients remain housed, and that their quality of life is improved beyond having a roof over their head. Once these goals are achieved, client independence of outreach is encouraged and expected to take place.

PHS has been working hard to establish trusting relationships with landlords in Burnaby to increase our available housing stock. We are please to announce that we leased a house in Burnaby and successfully housed five of our clients within it. Since inception, the outreach program has housed 86 clients. The team refines its housing strategies ongoing, and we are optimistic that the upcoming year will yield an even more streamlined and effective process that houses as many people as possible.



THANK YOU

to all the people and organizations that helped PHS help individuals facing homelessness and mental illness in Burnaby

VOLUNTEERS

Homeless Outreach Program Volunteers: Brian K., Dorothy P., Fida, Linda C., Linda T., Parviz, Paul B., Rahel, Razan, Ross W., Wanda, Kat, Kelly, Shane, MJ, Gabriella, Arlene, Darlene, Marion, Jim, Eva, Merrill, Colin, Shaka, Joe

Office: Herb, Kat, Grant, Marx

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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Burnaby Task Force on Homelessness
Fraser Health
Metro Vancouver
Southside Community Church
Burnaby Rotary Club
Province of British Columbia
City of Burnaby
Service Canada

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Tsu Chi Foundation
Cliff Avenue United Church
Burnaby Community Services
I Care Tutoring Douglas College
Creekside Church
Our Lady of Mercy Church
West Burnaby United Church



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