

**Feasibility of Community-based Alternatives  
to Provide Daily Living Supports to Low Income Seniors  
in South Vancouver**

**Prepared for:**

South Vancouver Neighbourhood House  
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## 1 Purpose of the Project

South Vancouver Neighbourhood House was given a contract by Vancouver Coastal Health, the Sharon Martin Community Health Trust Fund to explore the feasibility of implementing community-based approaches to provide low-cost daily living supports to seniors living in Community Health Area 6, South Vancouver.

The key objectives of this project are to:

- Identify and quantify (if possible) the need for home supports, more specifically, for daily living supports for low income seniors in South Vancouver.<sup>1</sup>
- Identify potential services providers and community partners that could respond to the needs of low income seniors.
- Determine an affordable fee structure that low income seniors would be able to pay for daily living support services.
- Explore the feasibility of any community economic development models that might be able to respond to both the needs of low income seniors and underemployed or new immigrant workers living in the community who could provide the needed services.

While this project focuses on the needs of seniors in South Vancouver, the intent is for the report findings to be used by other parts of the health region.

### *Project Background*

South Vancouver Neighbourhood House (SVNH) is a non profit society that has been facilitating community development and providing community programs for seniors since 1977. SVNH currently provides programs such as adult day care, seniors' wellness and congregate meal program, and a seniors' peer support home visiting program. It supports the Seniors' Advisory Council and Seniors' Network and has established seniors groups within a number of the ethnic communities of South Vancouver e.g., Punjabi, Chinese and Latino.

SVNH staff working with seniors, continue to hear from seniors that their needs for practical daily living support services are not being met. Many seniors are no longer eligible for home support from Vancouver Coastal Health or have had home support services reduced. This has created a need for assistance with practical daily living supports such as basic housecleaning, laundry, shopping, and meal preparation.

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<sup>1</sup> Home support as used in this report means practical daily living supports to enable seniors to remain independent in their own homes and includes: housekeeping, laundry, heavy chores, shopping, meal preparation and transportation. It does not include personal care.

Further, the services that are currently available in the community are often too expensive for many seniors who live on fixed low incomes. Some seniors have no family or social support networks and volunteer programs are strained to capacity and limited in scope. The purpose of this project is to investigate new ideas and opportunities to provide a less expensive alternative to existing daily living support services for low income seniors.

## **2 Methodology**

Multiple lines of inquiry and data sources were used to collect information for this project including: document review; review of available quantitative data; key informant interviews and meetings with relevant stakeholders such as seniors, health and social service providers, immigrant groups, colleges, the business sector, potential funders and other key leaders in South Vancouver; and focus groups sessions with diverse groups of seniors. See Appendix 1 for an alphabetical list of contacts. Outlined below is an overview of the key sources of data used for this project.

**Quantitative Data:** Key sources of quantitative data used included: The Seniors' Profile prepared by Vancouver Coastal Health, 2000; Census data - only 1996 census data by neighbourhood is available, but projections can be made; and information available from the Seniors Housing Information Program (SHIP). Some 2004 data on home support services was also provided by Vancouver Coastal Health. This information was used to prepare a profile on seniors in South Vancouver.

**Need Identification:** To determine the specific needs of seniors for daily living support services, interviews, meetings and focus group sessions were held with service providers, volunteers providing services to seniors and seniors throughout South Vancouver. For example, meetings were held with diverse groups of seniors including those involved in the Seniors Day Care, the Seniors' Network, the Seniors' Advisory Council, the Seniors' Wellness program, the Peer Support group, Punjabi seniors (men and women's groups) and Chinese seniors. (See Appendix 1 for complete list of individuals and groups contacted.)

**Exploring Community Solutions:** To identify possible community alternatives, discussions were held with such groups as: existing home support services providers; immigrant serving organizations and immigrant groups; organizations supporting the development of cooperatives, services providing transportation, selected businesses and community leaders in South Vancouver. (See Appendix 1 for complete list of individuals and groups contacted.)

### 3 Profile of Seniors in South Vancouver

The information to develop this profile of seniors in South Vancouver, Community Health Area 6<sup>2</sup> was taken largely from the Seniors Profile 2000 developed by Vancouver Coastal Health<sup>3</sup> which is based on 1996 Census data. At the time of writing this report, more recent census data by neighbourhoods was not available. Where possible, a number of projections have been made based on this information in order to reflect 2004 information and to project into the future. This information is supplemented by some limited 2004 data on home support services provided by Vancouver Coastal Health and information from the Seniors Housing Information Program (SHIP)

#### *South Vancouver Neighbourhoods*

South Vancouver is defined as Community Health Area 6 (CHA 6) within Vancouver Coast Health and consists of the following communities: Killarney, Marpole, Oakridge, Sunset, and Victoria-Fraserview

#### *Population Information*

The total population of CHA 6 based on the 1996 Census is: 118, 770 with the seniors population 65 years or over constituting 13.8% of the population or 16,159.

Based on this information, the 2004 projected total population of CHA 6 is 122,940 with the seniors' population 65 years or over constituting 14.7% of the population or 17,186.

In 2010, the projected total population of CHA 6 is 18,639 with seniors constituting 15.6% or 18,639.

The total population for CHA 6 projected to 2020 is 136,502 with a projected 18.7% or 25,549 representing seniors 65 years or over. This represents a five percent increase over 20 years and is the highest growth expected in seniors' population in Vancouver.

CHA 6 has the highest proportion of seniors in its population of all the CHA's in the Vancouver Coastal region. The number of people in the 65-79 year range is expected to increase by 63%. The number of people over 80 years is expected to increase by almost 26%. These increases are expected to occur even though the total population of CHA 6 is expected to increase by only 12.8% over the same time period.

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<sup>2</sup> Community Health Area 6 covers the following geographic area: 41<sup>st</sup> to Fraser River and Boundary to Granville.

<sup>3</sup> Seniors Profile 2000 Health and Social Profiles by the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board.

The Seniors Profile 2000 for South Vancouver also indicates the following:

*Neighbourhoods:*

- Seniors are concentrated in the Oakridge and Victoria-Fraserview areas.
- In Oakridge, 23% (2, 615) of the population are 65+ and one out of every three seniors is age 80 or older.
- In Fraserview, 15% (3,795) of the population are aged 65+
- In Killarney, Marpole and Oakridge, 22% of the populations in each area are 40-54 years old. Most of these individuals will be approaching 65 over the next twenty years.
- Victoria-Fraserview also has a high proportion of 40-54 year olds at 20.6% of its total population.
- Sunset has a greater number of children and youth.

*Income:* 27.3 % (32, 424) of seniors live below the low income cut-off. This is lower than the regional average of 30.7%. In 2004 the number will increase by .375 to approximately 32,546.

*Language:* 22.9% of seniors do not speak English or French. Among these seniors, 46% speak Chinese languages and 32% speak South Asian languages. Sunset has the greatest proportion of non-English speaking seniors at 33.9%.

*Living Alone:* 26% (30,880) of seniors live alone. Killarney, Sunset, Victoria-Fraserview have the highest concentrations of seniors who live alone in the areas. These neighbourhoods also have the highest number of single family housing in CHA 6. Marpole and Oakridge have a high proportion of seniors' complexes and 60% of available housing units in Marpole are rental.

*Home Support Services:*

85% of those who use home support services in South Vancouver are aged 65 or older. This is the second highest percentage in the region. Among seniors living in South Vancouver, women are more likely than men to receive home support services (eight percent of women versus three percent of men). One out of every four seniors receiving home support services is assessed as needing intermediate care or extended care (i.e. high levels of care) which is higher than other community health areas in the region. This may suggest that a higher proportion of the frail elderly live in CHA 6.

#### *Home Support (Additional Data)*

In June, 2004, 717 people in CHA 6 received home support from the Vancouver Coastal Health and 50% of these people are 80 years of age or older.

In 2002, 1640 clients contacted the Senior Housing Information Program (SHIP). Of those, 425 were from Vancouver and 184 indicated that they needed some home support. See Appendix 2 – Senior Housing Information Program Identification of Client Support Needs.

#### **4 Identification of Need**

In order to establish a better understanding of the type of daily living support services that seniors in South Vancouver require, interviews, meeting and focus groups were held with service providers, volunteers and frail and well seniors throughout South Vancouver. Key groups included: (For a complete list see Appendix 1)

- South Vancouver Seniors' Network
- South Vancouver Seniors' Advisory Council
- South Vancouver Adult Day Care
- BC Housing Property managers for Lower Mainland East and West Regions and Building managers for Orchard Park, Killarney Gardens and Stratford Gardens.
- Seniors Housing Information Program (SHIP)
- Seniors Well Aware Program
- Caregiver Support Group
- Vancouver Coastal Health 6 with the Adult and Older Adult Manager, the Community Developer, and the Volunteer Coordinator
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House the Punjabi Seniors' group (men's group and the women's group)
- Chinese Seniors' group coordinated through SUCCESS
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House Seniors Wellness group

Over 200 seniors were contacted as part of this project.

It was explained to the individuals and groups contacted that this project would not address personal care needs but was focusing on daily living supports. There was a high level of consensus among the people interviewed and those involved in meetings and focus groups that the major areas of need are:

- Basic Housecleaning - including vacuuming, cleaning bathrooms and kitchen, and garbage removal.
- Laundry – changing bedding and washing bed sheets
- Assistance with more heavy chores – cleaning the fridge, spring cleaning, gardening, moving furniture, etc. This need was more seasonal and is not required on a regular basis.

- Transportation – including to medical and other critical appointments, especially those not known about far in advance and transportation to attend a seniors’ program or for shopping.
- Assistance with shopping – While a number of respondents were aware of shop-by-phone services and volunteer programs assisting with shopping, this was identified as a need.

For the purposes of this project, community-based alternatives were explored to address the above noted needs. Alternatives for delivery of meals and providing companionship were not addressed. With regard to meal preparation, there was general acknowledgement that there are a number of meal programs available in the community even though some seniors complained about the quality of the meals. There are also a range of volunteer programs in the community that address companionship issues.

In addition to soliciting information about the needs of seniors for assistance with daily living supports, seniors were asked what they would be willing to pay for such services as basic housecleaning, laundry, heavy housecleaning and yard work. The general consensus was \$10.00 an hour. This was consistently identified by all the groups.

While there was agreement among the majority of respondents with regard to the specific needs for basic housecleaning, laundry, heavy housework/yard work, transportation and accompaniment for shopping and other errands, it is extremely difficult to quantify these needs. It should be noted that:

- Many seniors felt that they do not need the services now, but may need them in the near future or know others who need the service.
- Many of the Punjabi seniors live with family and many of their needs for daily living support are addressed.
- Out of a group of over 60 Chinese seniors, there was strong agreement that these services are needed but only a few indicated they would use the service right away.
- In housing complexes, a number of different arrangements are available:
  - Some seniors pay another tenant in the building to help them.
  - Some bartering is occurring, for example, seniors will provide food if someone helps them with them with vacuuming.
  - In the BC Housing complexes, a SMART Card is used to do the laundry. The value of this card varies depending on the person and the unit, but it is a cost efficient way to pay for the laundry machines in their buildings. Also, laundry facilities are being made more accessible on each floor for greater ease and convenience.

## **5 Proposed Community Solutions**

A number of low cost alternative community-based delivery options were explored to address the needs for basic housecleaning, laundry, heavy chores, assistance with shopping and transportation. The following key options are discussed in this report:

- Building on Existing Home Support Services
- College Students' Service
- Immigrant Cooperative
- Transportation Alternatives

Each option is described below, identifying activities carried out to assess its feasibility, pros and cons of each and the next steps required.

### **5.1 Building on Existing Home Support Services**

Review of existing home support services revealed the following:

- There are many home support agencies in Vancouver, both private and non-profit, providing a range of services, including cleaning, laundry, shopping, as well as companionship. The staff of these agencies have professional training, criminal record checks and in most cases are bonded workers. Services are provided in a number of different languages. The prices range from \$17.00 to over \$30.00 an hour. In most cases workers are paid a minimum of \$10.50 up to \$18.00 an hour plus benefits. Many companies then add on a 40% administration fee on top of what they actually pay their workers. Discussions with a number of home support agencies such as Drake Medox Health Services, Coit Home Support Services, ABC Home Support and others indicated that their business model could not accommodate provision of services at a lower cost than what they are currently charging. Both union and non union operations indicated that it would not be financially feasible to support lower cost alternatives.
- A number of non- profit organizations currently providing services to seniors were approached to discuss the possibilities of expanding their services and adding a new component to their operations, e.g., VON and South Vancouver Adult Day Care Program. The VON currently provides meals on wheels, an adult day program and respite, including overnight respite. Adding an additional service was seen as an added cost that would require more time and resources which were not currently available to these organizations.

- Discussions were undertaken with Blue Shell Services who currently offer laundry, residential cleaning and office cleaning in the Vancouver area. They have presented a model of cleaning services and laundry pick-up/drop-off for seniors living in South Vancouver.

*Proposed Service Presented by Blue Shell:*

Blue Shell is proposing a service that will provide a combination of light housekeeping and laundry pick-up and drop-off for seniors within a four block city radius. Every other week, a worker will visit a home and provide basic cleaning services, linen change, laundry collection and garbage removal, within a 55 minute period and remove dirty linen to the company van for laundering. The linen will be returned within two days – at a time to accommodate client needs. The worker will provide whatever cleaning the senior requires as long as it is within the 55 minute service time. The cost proposed is \$21.00 per hour every other week or \$42.00 monthly. A detailed description of this proposed service is found in Appendix 3.

*Pros:*

This is a service that combines cleaning and laundry, including bed linen changes. It is also a personalized service which will provide the services that the client needs at that time.

Blue Shell would take responsibility for speaking to seniors' groups and promoting the program, for registration of clients and would manage all the administration.

This service could be implemented anywhere throughout Vancouver where seniors live within a defined geographic radius. It could be provided to seniors living in a housing complex.

Workers are trained, have criminal record checks and are bonded.

*Cons:*

Seniors accepting the service need to make a commitment to a regular service. For this model to be economical for Blue Shell, it requires 14 residents daily within a four block radius to participate.

The cost may not be affordable without some subsidy from Vancouver Coastal Health for low income seniors at \$42.00 per month.

Blue Shell is seeking some assistance from SVNH in terms of being able to use the community centre as a focal point for registering seniors.

*Next Steps:*

SVNH and Vancouver Coastal Health would need to determine if this service should be piloted in the South Vancouver area.

SVNH would need to play a role in helping to inform seniors of this service and providing the community centre as an initial focal point for Blue Shell to register seniors.

Consideration would need to be given by Vancouver Coastal Health for some subsidy to support low income seniors who could not afford the monthly rate.

## 5.2 College Students' Service

Review of the Student and Senior Work Assistance Program (SWAP) in Victoria provides the basis for a low cost alternative that could meet the needs of seniors in South Vancouver and be applied throughout the health region. SWAP is a partnership with University of Victoria and Silver Threads, a community-based organization in Victoria providing services to seniors. The University of Victoria identifies the students who are interested and gathers information on their skills and experiences and the type of work they wish to do with the seniors. They provide this information to Silver Threads, who in turn, administers the program, identifies the seniors that need assistance and matches students with seniors to provide home support services at a rate of \$10.00 per hour, for a minimum of two hours. Each senior is given three names and is responsible for interviewing and selecting the student he/she wishes. The senior then pays the student directly. The program has been operating for 12 years and has proven very effective. The feasibility of adapting this model to South Vancouver was assessed and is described below.

### *Proposed College Students' Service:*

A number of community colleges in South Vancouver and Vancouver have been approached and are very interested and willing to partner with a community group to assist seniors with daily living supports. The three Colleges that have expressed a keen interest and willingness are:

- Langara Community College
- Vancouver Community College
- Vancouver Career College

Each of these colleges has nursing programs, resident care aid programs, and other programs in the helping professions. The Colleges are willing to market the program to students within their college, have students complete an application form and identify the interested students to a community agency. The application form would be an essential tool to identify the interests and availability of the students. It is proposed that the following information be collected:

- name, student number and contact information (the student must be registered with a student number)
- student availability specifying days, time and over what period of time the student is prepared to provide services
- the type of work the student is willing to do such as: basic housecleaning, laundry, heavy housework, yard work, accompanying a senior for errands or shopping
- languages spoken
- other special skills and experience.

The intent is to begin the service utilizing students from nursing, residential care aid or other programs in the helping professions since these students already have criminal record checks, have training in first aid and have an interest in working with seniors.

Preliminary estimates of the number of students in these types of programs that are interested in providing a service to seniors indicate the following:

- Langara – Approximately 50% of the October, 2004 program participants in the Resident Care program indicated an interest in assisting seniors. The program intakes about 20 students every 21 weeks. There are over 500 students in the Nursing program at various levels of the program. A canvass of students in some of the classes indicated an initial 10% interest.
- Vancouver Community College – 25 out of the 35 students (71%) in the Nursing and Home Support and Resident Care programs in October, 2004 classes indicated an interest in participating in this program. Approximately 25% of the student in the other helping professions identified an interest. The College estimates that approximately 100 students would be available over the year at different times to participate in the program.

The program will require coordination from a community agency. The South Vancouver Neighbourhood House (SVNH) would be willing to coordinate the service, market the program, accept calls from seniors and match the students with the seniors. However, this will require additional resources of a part time person, particularly in the initial implementation stage. Coordination time required on an ongoing basis will depend upon program uptake. Based on the experience in Victoria, the average is about 50 calls a month.

*Pros:*

- The approach is easy to implement.
- It has been operating successfully in Victoria for 12 years with no issues and very minor complaints.
- Seniors who participated in the focus group sessions were asked their views on this model and it received strong endorsement.
- The SVNH Seniors' Advisory Council indicated that it would provide a letter of support, if required.
- The Chinese Seniors group offered to distribute information about the program to seniors in their community if a flyer or brochure was developed.
- The fee of \$10.00 an hour works for both the student and the senior (with minimum of a 2 hour commitment)
- The service helps both the senior and the student. Students can gain experience working with seniors while being paid and seniors are able to have their needs met and stay at home longer.

- The program can begin small without any major cost implications and has the capacity to grow.
- Students are available all year round because of the semester system at the Colleges.
- Using nursing and resident care aid students means that students have some training and may be more sensitive to the needs of the senior population. They also already have criminal record checks.
- The students may be able to speak a number of different languages to accommodate the language needs of the seniors.
- House insurance will help protect seniors from loss if any items are missing.
- This model could be adopted by other seniors' programs or Neighbourhood Houses who are willing to provide the coordination.

*Cons:*

- While seniors in the focus group sessions were very much in favour of this option, a number raised the issue of safety. As indicated, using students in nursing resident care aid programs or other helping professions would help alleviate their concerns. If the program is opened to a wider group of students, then students will need to agree to have a criminal record check completed. Preliminary discussions with South Vancouver Community Policing indicate that if students are hired and being paid, they would need to pay a \$50.00 fee for a criminal record check.
- A concern was expressed that some seniors may not feel that they are able to interview the students and select one. If family or friends are not available to assist, the SVNH Peer Support Program could assist seniors in this selection process and the Neighbourhood House could be used as neutral territory, if the senior does not want to meet the student in their home for the first meeting.
- The two hour minimum requirement might not be affordable to some low income seniors without some form of subsidy from Vancouver Coastal Health.
- Using college students does imply a turnover, since students may only be available for a specified time period. The lack of continuity can be very stressful for seniors who need time to build trust and communicate needs. Students would need to specify in their application how long they would be willing to provide the service and this information would be made known to the seniors. Also, students may make arrangements with the seniors to continue providing services even after they have completed their program at the College.
- The \$10 hourly rate may also contribute to higher turnover once a student completes his/her program as it is less likely that students will continue providing services if they can get full-time or higher wages elsewhere.
- Seniors would need to supply their own cleaning products.

- While South Vancouver Neighbourhood House (SVNH) has indicated a willingness to coordinate this type of program, they would need funding to support a part-time position. A number of considerations are as follows:
  - Finding a community sponsor to pay for a part-time position is not easily achieved.
  - It might be possible to secure a social work practicum student from Langara to assist with setting up the program if this fits with their timing and program goals. However, this resource would not be able to provide ongoing coordination support to the service.
  - Using volunteers to provide ongoing support to the program would require resources to coordinate train and supervise the volunteers and volunteers would be required on a daily basis.
  - Consideration should be given by Vancouver Coastal Health to fund a part-time position to establish and manage the program on an ongoing basis.

*Next Steps:*

SVNH and Vancouver Coastal Health would need to discuss how best to fund a part-time staff to coordinate the program.

Arrangements would need to be confirmed with the colleges that have agreed to participate.

Marketing of the program to seniors would be critical so that they are aware of this option.

### **5.3 Immigrant Cooperative**

The option of providing low income seniors with a low cost alternative to home support and at the same time providing employment to new immigrants living in the community was explored. Contact was made with immigrant serving organizations to identify potential interest. For example:

- A number of groups in the Filipino Community were contacted, but no interest was identified.
- The South Asian Women's Centre was contacted but no interest was identified.
- The Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISS) was consulted to determine if any of the immigrants taking the Resident Care Aid Program with ISS might be interested in forming a cooperative. ISS indicated that these immigrants would not be interested since they are paid while they take their training and the majority become employed after the training.
- The Stepping-Up Program offered by ISS was also contacted to determine if the unemployed immigrant women who are part of their program might be interested, but no interest was identified.

- The Hispanic Community Centre is working with a group of new immigrants who expressed a keen interest in setting up a cooperative and providing daily living support services.

*Proposed Immigrant Worker Cooperative:*

The Hispanic Community Centre is interested in supporting a group of Hispanic immigrants in their desire to obtain employment. A group of Hispanic immigrants has expressed an interest in providing daily living supports to seniors, and the idea of forming a worker cooperative was appealing to them. The issue that needs to be addressed is whether a low cost alternative for seniors in South Vancouver (e.g., \$10 per hour) can constitute a viable business for an immigrant group wishing to initiate a worker cooperative. Consideration is currently being given by the Hispanic group to the feasibility of establishing a worker cooperative to meet the daily living support needs of low income seniors.

To assess the feasibility of establishing an immigrant worker cooperative to provide a low cost alternative to seniors to meet their needs for daily living supports, the following factors require consideration:

***Advantages of a Worker Cooperative Model:***

- Provides an opportunity for employing new immigrants.
- Enables the pooling of capital, resources and expertise.
- The business is run by the workers - workers have a say in how the business is run. There is no employer-employee structure.

**Incubating (Support) Agency:**

- It is useful for a developing cooperative to have an established group that can assist and support the cooperative, particularly during its developing stages.
- An incubating agency could provide organization and administrative support to ease some of the burden of the cooperative.

**Training:**

- Advice and information on how to set up a cooperative is available from a number of sources such as the BC Cooperative Association and the Community Economic Development Network.
- Some minimal training to provide domestic services is required such as: Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (\$59 per person); Food Safe Basics (\$79 per person) and First Aid Training would be desirable (\$72 per person).

**Sources of Funding:**

- A cooperative will need start up funds as well as ongoing operating funds. There are a number of sources of funding that could be considered such as: members, external investors, public funding which

is very limited, or a bank or credit union business loan. In the latter situation, a business case would need to be presented before such a loan is approved.

- Some sources of funding may be available to assist with the development of a business plan.

#### **Liability Insurance:**

- The cooperative requires some minimal liability insurance. This would amount to approximately \$2000.00 per year and bonding would be \$500 a year per worker.

#### **Capital Costs:**

- Consideration needs to be given to space, where would the service be located. Initial consideration is that it could be home-based.
- Office equipment would be required such as vacuums, fax, computer and printer. If this equipment is not donated then a cost of approximately \$6000 would need to be considered.
- Cleaning supplies would need to be considered at approximately \$100.00 or more per month.

#### **Other costs of running a Business**

- For the cooperative to be successful it must be run as a business and therefore there needs to be a feasible business case.
- The business case will need to consider other costs such as:
  - Managing the service
  - Marketing
  - Telephone
  - Office supplies/postage
  - Travel
  - Accounting

#### **Language**

Ability to speak English is essential to provide the service.

#### **Market and Cost of Service**

While a need has been identified that seniors in South Vancouver need housecleaning, laundry and yard work, the number of customers required and the cost of the service to both meet the needs of seniors for low cost alternative and a liveable wage the workers of the cooperative requires closer examination.

A number of preliminary scenarios and options have been developed to determine the feasibility of providing daily living support services to seniors at a reasonable price while ensuring that the service providers earn a liveable wage. See Appendix 4 for details on the cost scenarios.

To develop these scenarios, several assumptions were made surrounding appropriate pricing and wages, the number of employees and customers and the associated costs of providing the service. A liveable wage of \$11.10 per hour (including benefits) was used based on information from other similar services. Since this amount exceeds the \$10 per hour that seniors are willing to pay for home support services, the business case necessitates some kind of subsidy to account for this shortfall and cover the other costs of the service. Based on these assumptions, three scenarios were examined.

- The first scenario assumed that the service was being provided to low income seniors only (paying \$10.00 an hour) and therefore a subsidy of \$48,000 annually would be needed unless fixed costs could be reduced.
- The second and third scenarios attempted to subsidize the service to low income seniors by also serving regular customers at a premium rate. However, in the second scenario, the competitive regular rate still was not able to cover all the costs of the service.
- The third scenario assumed that some costs were donated, decreasing the amount per customer needed to break even. Therefore, in this scenario, service to regular customers was able to subsidize the lower rate charge to seniors. However, the ratio of regular customers needed to seniors was very large and therefore the number of seniors served would be quite few.

The most realistic scenarios to provide daily living support services to seniors at a reasonable price would be to get as many fixed costs as possible subsidized for a start-up business and have the remainder of the cost differential subsidized.

#### *Care Connection Cooperative*

A worker cooperative that has recently been established in Mission for home support services provides further evidence of the difficulty of establishing a low cost alternative for seniors and a liveable wage for the service provider.

Care Connection Cooperative in Mission was formed by several former care aids and members of the Hospital Employee Union. They were supported by the Hospital Employee Union. They received a grant (\$13,000) for marketing and other financial support for cooperative development. The initial members received EI during the development phase and participated in the Self Employment Program. As part of this program, they received business training, mentors, advice counselling, assistance with business plan development and marketing training.

Care Connections provides a range of home support services including nursing care and housekeeping. Currently it has one LPN who is taking her LPN Refresher Course and has completed Nursing Foot Care courses. There is one Home Support Worker member working almost full-time and one member full-time running the day to day operations such as responding to calls, doing assessments, dispatching, promotion, and administration. Having someone running the day to day operations is seen as essential.

There are different pricing structures (charge-out rates) for the different levels of care. For example:

- Nursing Care/personal care - charge out rates range from \$27/hour to \$23/hour depending upon the number of hours of service being provided.
- Housekeeping - Once every two weeks (3 hour minimum) charge out rate is \$24/hour; Once per week (3 hour minimum) charge our rate is \$22/hour

Pay out rates to service providers:

- If the individual is a casual worker they are paid 60% of the charge out rate.
- If the individual is a member of the cooperative and does no management/administrative tasks they are paid 65% of the charge out rate.
- If the individual is a member of the cooperative and does 5 hours of management/administrative tasks they are paid 70% of the charge out rate.

#### *Considerations of a Worker Immigrant Cooperative in South Vancouver*

- There must be an identified interest and willingness to consider a worker cooperative.
  - A group of Hispanic immigrants have identified an interest and willingness to consider a worker cooperative.
- There should be a support agency.
  - The Hispanic Community Centre has expressed an interest to support the group, but the nature of this support still needs to be negotiated.
- Proficiency in English is required.
  - Currently the interested Hispanic group members are taking ESL classes and their ability to provide the service in English will need to be considered.

- Prices and Wages must be set to make the business viable.
  - At \$10 an hour and serving only seniors in South Vancouver, the group would not be able to make their business viable.
  - For an immigrant cooperative to be able to provide seniors with a low cost alternative, they would need to get as many fixed costs as possible donated for a start-up business, expand their service to a wider group to serve regular customers at a higher price and have the remainder of the cost differential subsidized for the low income seniors.

#### *Next Steps*

- The Hispanic Community Centre and the group of Hispanic immigrants are currently considering the cost scenarios that have been developed. Follow-up and support would be required to assist this group if they are interested in proceeding.

### **5.4 Transportation Alternatives**

The need for transportation to medical appointments, for shopping or to attend seniors programs were identified as major needs. Many of the seniors complained about the HandyDart system. The major issues identified were:

- Waiting time - Long waits on the line to book.
- Advance bookings - Need to book 4 days in advance which does not enable response to emergency or unknown events.
- Trip priority - Priority being given to medical appointments and little emphasis on meeting other needs for transportation such as shopping

The HandyDart program will be turned over in January, 2005 to a new group, Greater Vancouver Home Support. These concerns have been identified to the Executive Director.

Taxi Savers are coupons that eligible individuals may purchase and use for reduced taxi fares. This program is available to individuals who are registered with, or eligible for HandyDart, and who have a HandyPass (a photo identification card issued by BC Transit). A person is eligible for HandyDart if he or she has a physical or mental disability which prevents the use of regular public transit without assistance. A person with a HandyPass may purchase up to two booklets of Taxi Savers at a time from their local HandyDart operator; a booklet contains \$40 worth of Taxi Savers but costs \$20. They can phone the taxi company of their choice for service, without having to pre-book rides. Some of the seniors were not aware of this service, some indicated the process to complete the application and get an I.D. is cumbersome and seniors need help with this, while others indicated that some taxis will not accept the coupons and are not always helpful to seniors.

The option that was explored in greater depth for this project was the use of car dealership Customer Service Vans. A program already exists on the North

Shore where the Customer Service Van of one of the car dealerships is used a few times a week to pick up seniors at a seniors' housing complex and take the seniors shopping. This is a drop-off and pick-up service. The project is coordinated through the North Shore Neighbourhood House, with United Way funding the Coordinator.

A number of car dealerships in the South Vancouver area were approached. Three of them have a customer shuttle service: Southside Nissan, Vancouver Honda and Don Dockstader. Southside Nissan indicated that their shuttle service is fully occupied and they would not be able to assist. Don Dockstader has responded positively and is open to further discussion.

*Proposed Transportation Service:*

Don Dockstader has indicated that their Courtesy Shuttle Service could be used to assist with transporting seniors. There are a number of options available and these require further discussion. The Courtesy Shuttle Service makes regular drop-offs to specified locations from 7:45 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and regular pick-ups from 4:00 to 5:30p.m. There is some capacity to pick seniors up during these times, if they are on route. A further option is to make use of the Shuttle Service at less peak times for scheduled drop-offs and pick-ups. Scheduled shopping trips could also be arranged once or twice a week. Each trip scheduled could accommodate approximately six seniors. A number of scheduled trips could be organized on a regular basis.

From the point of view of Don Dockstader, the service cannot inconvenience their ongoing commitment to their customers and should be a reasonable workload for the drivers of the Courtesy Shuttle Service. This service would require organization from SVNH in terms of recruiting seniors, organizing the schedule and liaising with the drivers.

*Pros:*

Insurance is not an issue. Having checked with their insurers, as long as they are not charging for the service or being compensated in any manner, they do not incur any liability should something happen.

*Cons:*

Requires coordination and if coordinated by SVNH, this would require staff resources.

*Next Steps:*

- SVNH needs to identify a resource to coordinate the transportation program. This role could be linked to the College Student Service coordination role.
- Further discussion with Doc Dockstader is required to identify most convenient options for scheduled rides.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

South Vancouver has a large number of seniors, 17,186 and an estimated 27% are low income. However, it is difficult to estimate how many of these seniors will take advantage of a service to provide home support at a low cost right away. Any services that are offered will need to be well communicated through the existing seniors' programs and networks, and community and ethnic media to reach out to seniors.

Existing home support service agencies do not have much flexibility in terms of providing low cost alternatives. One option presented by Blue Shell may provide an alternative for seniors who can afford the cost of \$42 a month for approximately 2 hours of cleaning and laundry. However, low income seniors may require partial subsidy to be able to take advantage of this type of service.

A number of low cost alternatives can be implemented in the short-term and should be given consideration:

- The College Student Service
- The Car Dealership Courtesy Van for transportation.

Both of these services require funding for a resource to develop and coordinate the service on an ongoing basis. It is recommended that this resource be attached to the South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, building upon its existing programs to seniors and funding for this resource be provided by Vancouver Coastal Health.

These types of low cost alternatives could be implemented throughout the region with minimal resources from Vancouver Coastal Health and in partnership with community groups providing services to seniors.

A cooperative as an alternative may be considered as a longer-term solution. However, it should be recognized that establishing an immigrant worker cooperative to provide seniors with a low cost alternative does not readily provide the immigrant group with a viable business. As illustrated by the Care Connection Cooperative in Mission, start-up funding, support for training and a reasonable wage for workers are important features. Further consideration needs to be given to working with interested groups to determine what support and partial subsidization programs could be developed that would assist low income seniors while enabling immigrant groups or unemployed workers gain employment at a liveable wage.

While a number of community solutions are possible, consideration needs to be given by Vancouver Coastal Health to various types of subsidization approaches that would assist low income seniors to meet their needs for daily living supports.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Contact List**

#### **Feasibility of Community-based Alternatives to Provide Daily Living Supports to Low Income Seniors in South Vancouver**

**Contact List (Alphabetical Order)**  
**South Vancouver Neighbourhood House**  
**Feasibility of Community-based Alternatives to Provide Daily Living Supports**  
**to Low Income Seniors in South Vancouver**

ABC Home Support Ann Demitry	604 420-1236
BC Cooperative Association Jan Taylor, Director of Co-op Development	604 662-3906 604 878-4932
BC Housing Gail Burak, Health Services Manager	604 439- 4742
Blue Shell Laundry Company MJ Wood General Manager Rob Reeleder Owner	604 682-2844
Canadian Community Economic Development Network Nicole Chaland	250 386-9980
City of Vancouver Social Planning Anne Kloppenborg	604 871-6031
Coit Home Cleaning Service Peter Boyce	604 296-4006
Don Dockstader Motors Ltd. (Volvo) Mark Kellock Vice President	604 323-2211
Drake Medox Health Solutions Barbara Fry	604 877-0690
Family Services of Greater Vancouver Cheryl Mixon	604 874- 2938 local 116
Family Services of Greater Vancouver Employment Centre – 1638 E. Broadway Katherine Morgan	604 434-0367
Filipino’s Women’s Centre	604 215-1103

Filipino Nurses' Support Group

Greater Vancouver Home Support  
Ron McLeod

604 714-3500

Immigrant Services Society of BC

Chris Friesen

604 684-7498

Alan Hendricks – Residential Care Aid Training

604 684-2561

Maria Nguyen – Stepping Up Program

604 684-2561

Handy Dart

Lillian Klassen

General Manager, Pacific Transit Corporation

504-430-2742

Hispanic Community Centre

Executive Director, Suzana

604 872-4431

Hospital Employees Union

Marcie Cohen

604 456-7038

Jewish Family Services

Vickie Robinson

604 257-5151

Langara College

Karyn Hall

Continuing Education

604 323-5503

Joe Rosen, Social Work program

604 323-5772

Member of Parliament

Patrick Wong

605 775 -1033

(Assistant Kitty Chan 775-1050)

MOSAIC

Sherman Chan

604 – 254-9626

Multicultural Helping House

Eleanor Guerro-Campbell and Maria Callegon

604 879-3277

North Shore Neighbourhood House

Courtesy Van Program

Lucinda Flavelle

604 983-9958

Pacific Institute of Community Services ( PICS)

Lydija

604 324 -7733

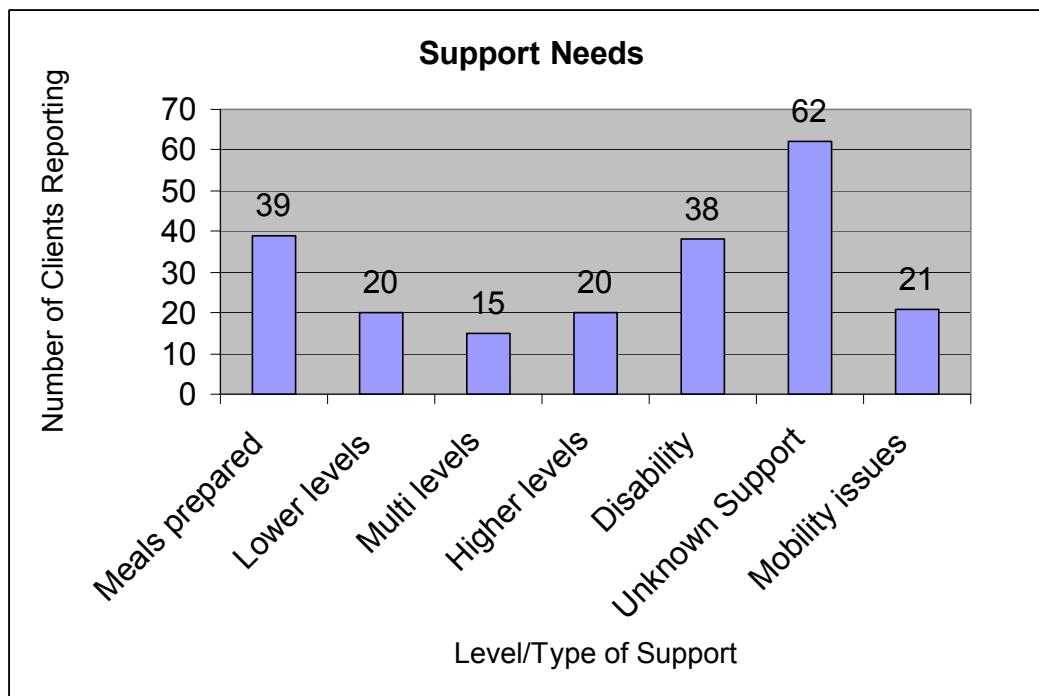
Royal Bank Manager Stan Edwards	604 482-6823
Seniors Housing Information Program Val McDonald	604 520- 6621
Seniors Well Aware Program S.W.A. P. Nigel Smith	604 633-4230
Sharon Martin Community Health Trust Fund Lezlie Wagman	604 714-3799
Silver Threads Service, Victoria Edie Copland, E.D. Sheila Statham – Program Coordinator Student and Senior Work Assistance Program (SWAP)	1 250 388-4268
South Vancouver Adult Day Care Maggie Duckett	604 430-6373
SUCCESS – Chinese Seniors Group Sharon Tong	604 408-7274 local 1062
Southside Nissan Stephen Peacock, Service Manager	604 324-4644
South Vancouver Community Policing Adrienne Balazs	604 717 -2940
South Vancouver Neighbourhood House Seniors Peer Support Paula Khan	604 324-6212
South Vancouver Neighbourhood House Punjabi Seniors Preet Pandhu	604 324-6212
South Vancouver Neighbourhood House Latino Seniors Group Aurora Bach	604 324-6212
South Vancouver Seniors Council Joan Wright	604 324-6212

South Vancouver Seniors Network Mary King	604 423-3670
UBC Job Link Program Coordinator Katelin	604 822-5627
UBC (Health Research) Yuri Cvitkovich	604 822-9841
University of Victoria Student Services Jennifer Margison	250 721-8418
Vancouver Career College Arlene Latham	604 915-9675
Vancouver Coastal Health Caregiver Support Program	604 877 -4699
Vancouver Coastal Health Coordinator Community Consultation and Partnerships Marie Hudsmith	604 714-3752
Vancouver Coastal Health Home Support Judy Kelly	604 714- 3756
Vancouver Coastal Health Hospice Coordinator Val Upton	604 709-6447
Vancouver Coastal Health North Shore Hilary King	604 983-6003
Vancouver Coastal Health Mental Health Services Linda Campbell	604 734-5265
Vancouver Coastal Health VH 6 Shannon Berg Adult and Older Adult Manager	604 301 -2200

Vancouver Coastal Health VH 6 Jazmin Miranda (Community Developer)	604 321 -6151
Vancouver Coastal Health VH 6 Sepia Sharma Volunteer Coordinator	604 301 -2228
Vancouver Coastal Health VH 6 Burt Massiah (Citizen's Advisory Group)	604 325-8210
Vancouver Community College Pat Bawtinheimer Dean, School of Health Sciences	604 443-8599
Vancouver Honda Neil McRae, Service Manager	604 324-6666
Victoria Order of Nurses (VON) Marian Wilkins	604 733-6614

## **Appendix 2**

### **Senior Housing Information Program Identification of Client Support Needs**



Information Provided by Seniors Housing Information Program: September, 2004

**Levels of Support Defined - Of 425 Clients 184 stated they needed some support and based on the information they provided we classified them in the following ways.**

**Lower Levels of Support** - clients can live independently but need lower level housing supports (such as personal care, meals, housecleaning etc) in order to remain independent and maintain current health levels. The health problems of these clients do not debilitate the client from functioning day-to-day.

**Multi Levels of Support** - Clients who may need fluctuating amounts of care due to the treatment and recovery of an illness or deteriorating health. Multi-levels of support also represent the different support needs of a couple, as one spouse may need more care than the other.

**Higher levels of Support** - Clients who cannot live independently due to health problems that debilitate the client from functioning on a day to day level. These clients may need to have 24 hour supervision or extensive monitoring and or a residential care setting.

**Disability** - This category of disability included clients with a physical or mental disability. A client with disabilities may need lower, higher or multi-levels of support, or no health support.

**Unknown Health Support** - Health support is needed but it is unknown how much support is needed.

**Appendix 3**

**Blue Shell Services Proposal**  
**for**  
**Residential Cleaning/Laundry Pick-Up and Drop Off**

**Blue Shell Service Inc.**  
**RESIDENTIAL CLEANING/LAUNDRY PICK-UP & DROP OFF**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Blue Shell Services Inc.** has been approached by Zena Simces & Associates to create a model of care inclusive of cleaning services and laundry pick-up/drop-off for seniors living in the community of South Vancouver. Based on the premise that many seniors live in clusters in this community, an economical model for the provision of limited cleaning service and regular laundry drop-off and pick-up has been drafted to address those who wish to remain in the community but who are beginning to find some aspects of home cleaning a challenge.

This model will describe the provision of cleaning and laundry pick-up/drop off service for one hour on an Every Other Week (EOW) basis to registered clients residing in a four-city block radius.

**INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS**

- **Central place for registration** for interested participants. Registration to be completed at this site by an employee of Blue Shell Services. This employee to contact participants with schedule once registration *with a minimum number of participants from the four-block radius*, has been completed. For this to be affordable for both the client and the provider, a minimum number of participants in a neighbourhood (*four city block radius*) will be required. Central Seniors Centres or Community Centres would be ideal locations. Information about the service to be distributed at same and via local seniors groups. A Blue Shell employee will visit and speak to prospect groups wanting this service.
- **One vehicle, 2 workers** with necessary cleaning equipment, daily to provide cleaning and laundry drop-off/pick-up in a four city block radius.
- **Laundry** facility, staffed to ensure the washing, drying and folding of client laundry, labelling efficiently for delivery purposes.

**SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL**

Two workers from Blue Shell Services will drive to the designated area. The two workers will start work at opposite corners of the four-block radius, the vehicle to be parked centrally for laundry drop-off and clean laundry pick-up by workers. Dirty laundry to be bagged in green plastic bags and clean laundry to be bagged in white plastic bags.

There will be a one bag limit, kitchen garbage bag size. Workers carry a company backpack containing cleaning solutions, gloves, plastic bags and laundry slips for clear addressing.

Every other week (EOW) a worker will visit a home and provide basic cleaning services, linen change, laundry collection and garbage removal, *within a 55 minute period* and remove dirty linen to the company van for laundering, at this time any laundry taken during the previous visit to be returned clean to the client – if this laundry includes bedding, at the clients request, it can be returned to the bed following linen change. *(This return delivery schedule can be adjusted to accommodate client need, as the vehicle will be in the neighbourhood daily)* Time permitting the worker will provide other cleaning services as requested within the 55-minute service time. These are basic cleaning services so charges will not be altered for larger or smaller residences. For example it is anticipated that one area in the home that may require cleaning on a regular basis is the bathroom which some seniors may find strenuous. Bathrooms are generally of a similar size at most residences. It is important to note that the maximum amount of time given to the client will be 55 minutes only; the worker to go to the next proximal residence will use 5 minutes.

This service will accommodate clientele with physical disability who are finding bed linen changes, garbage removal and laundry a challenge to complete. Additional cleaning services, or time can be purchased at the time of registration or requested as needed by contacting Blue Shell directly and requesting additional service.

Two workers will be able to complete 14 residences (*7 apiece*) daily based on this service provision model. Ideally, the minimum number of residences requiring service in a neighbourhood (*four city block radius*) will be 14.

At the end of each day dirty laundry from the neighbourhood will be delivered to the Blue Shell laundry site and completed for return during the next visit or as required by the client. Clearly addressed and dated laundry slips will be completed by the worker to ensure the laundry is returned correctly and in good time to the client.

### **COST to CLIENT for BASIC CLEANING/LAUNDRY SERVICE**

Blue Shell will provide 1 hour of cleaning every other week and pick-up and drop-off 1 bag of laundry as needed. The cost for this service to the individual residence will be \$21.00/hour every other week or **\$42.00 monthly**. There will be no reduction in cost if the laundry service is not accessed, however on-site laundry can be started at the instruction of the client.

Additional hours of cleaning service can be requested (*one week in advance to accommodate scheduling*) at a cost of \$18.00/hour. Additional laundry can be

requested and the client will be invoiced based on our per pound competitive commercial rates. *(see attached)*

## **CONCLUSION**

Theoretically, this service model could be adapted to a number of different neighbourhoods by mobilizing the laundry vehicle, leaving the 2 workers in the neighbourhood to complete the cleaning, workers to call for dirty laundry pick-up by a driver working in numerous neighbourhoods. All staff at Blue Shell Service Inc. is in communication via cell phone during working hours, which will facilitate expedient and efficient laundry pick-up and drop-off as requested by on site cleaners.

The model of service described does not address additional services that could be accessed by the client, such as local shopping, meal preparation and local appointment attendance. These could be included as options at the time of registration if the need for cleaning services is minimal and the desired service completed within the 55-minutes allotted to the client/residence.

## **CLIENT COST SUMMARY**

1 Hour + 1 Bag Laundry – Every other week (EOW) = **\$42.00 /mo**

2 Hour + 1 Bag Laundry – Every other week (EOW) = **\$80.00/mo**

Additional Cleaning Hours = **\$18.00/Hour**

Carpet Cleaning = **\$0.40 sq.**

## **Appendix 4**

### **Immigrant Cooperative Daily Living Support Services Cost Scenarios**

**Immigrant Cooperative  
Daily Living Support Services  
Cost Scenarios**

There are several different options in providing daily living support services to low income seniors. The options are based on a total fixed cost assumption of \$38,873 and a per employee cost of \$682. These scenarios assume 4 full time employees working to capacity to serve 80 seniors. It is also assumed that customers require, on average, 1.5 hours of service per week.

<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Fixed Costs</b>	
Management person	\$15,000
Insurance	\$2,000
Telephone and answering service	\$673
Marketing	\$7,000
Office Equipment (fax, printer, computer)	\$6,000
Supplies- equipment	\$1,000
Supplies- cleaning	\$1,200
Supplies- office	\$500
Office Space	\$0
Travel	\$1,500
Accounting	\$4,000
<b>Total Fixed Costs</b>	<b>\$38,873</b>
<b>Variable Costs (per employee)</b>	
WHMIS Training	\$59
Food Safe Basics Training	\$79
Emergency First Aid Training	\$72
Help for Home Care Givers Training	\$72
Bonding	\$500
Less membership fee	(\$100)
<b>Total Variable Costs</b>	<b>\$682</b>

**Option 1:**

Provide daily living support services to 80 seniors at a rate of \$10 per hour while paying 4 full time employees \$11.10 per hour (including benefits).

At this price and wage level, the per-hour loss is \$1.10. Therefore, in order to serve seniors at this price, and have 4 employees work full time a subsidy of approximately \$48,000 per year is needed. This amount would increase by \$2,270 per full time employee added.

**Option 2:**

Provide daily living support services to seniors at a rate of \$10 per hour and provide services to regular customers at a rate of \$17 per hour while paying 4 full time employees

\$11.10 per hour (including benefits). The breakeven price per customer is \$18.32 if there are a total of 80 regular customers.

**Option 3:**

With some of the fixed costs donated, provide daily living support services to seniors at a rate of \$10 per hour and provide services to regular customers at a rate of \$17 per hour while paying 4 full time employees \$11.10 per hour (including benefits).

If Office Equipment, Supplies Equipment and Accounting are donated, the total fixed costs decrease to \$27,873. Variable costs remain the same.

<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Fixed Costs</b>	
Management person	\$15,000
Insurance	\$2,000
Telephone and answering service	\$673
Marketing	\$7,000
Office Equipment (fax, printer, computer)	\$0
Supplies- equipment	\$0
Supplies- cleaning	\$1,200
Supplies- office	\$500
Office Space	\$0
Travel	\$1,500
Accounting	\$0
<b>Total Fixed Costs</b>	<b>\$27,873</b>
<b>Variable Costs (per employee)</b>	
WHMIS Training	\$59
Food Safe Basics Training	\$79
Emergency First Aid Training	\$72
Help for Home Care Givers Training	\$72
Bonding	\$500
Less membership fee	(\$100)
<b>Total Variable Costs</b>	<b>\$682</b>

In order to break even the service must serve eleven (11) regular customers for every one (1) senior customer. Therefore working at capacity, the service must have 6 senior customers and 74 regular customers that use the service regularly (on average 1.5 each week) during the year.