



Canadian Mental
Health Association
North and West Vancouver
Mental health for all

ANNUAL REPORT

2020–2021

DEDICATION TO ERIC AND DOUG

This report is dedicated to the memory of those who lost their lives during the pandemic. At CMHA NWV, we lost two of our friends and clients. Eric lived at our Circle of Care house #1. He was a lovely man who always strived to do his part to show care and love for his roommates and friends. After a brain injury diagnosis and after experiencing housing instability for many years, he was able to transform his own suffering to be of service to others.

Doug was a long-term resident at CMHA's Lillian House. He overcame serious mental illness, homelessness, and addiction to become an important part of our community.

His funeral service at the North Shore Alliance Church was proof he was loved. Close to 100 people, in person and in their vehicles, showed up to grieve his passing and share memories of his competitiveness at crib, his joyful nature, and his love of Tim Hortons.

Tarn, our Mental Health Worker, shared the following: *"I have so many memories with Doug: hanging out at the beach with the guys in the summer; our walks at Mosquito Creek; playing pitch and putt; sitting together to watch the Young and the Restless; and the PNE ... I am so glad I got to share with him that he has always had a special place in my heart and that I love him."*

GET INVOLVED

BECOME A MEMBER

Our members have a say in the future of CMHA, with the opportunity to run for and elect our governing board.

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR

Our programs and services would not be possible without the support of our donors. By becoming a monthly donor, you are supporting crucial services, as well as the growth of our organization, so we can achieve our vision of a mentally healthy North Shore community.

SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTER

Get our free monthly newsletter delivered straight to your inbox each month. Learn about the latest news, activities, resources, programs, support groups and events in your community.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

 [CMHA.NWV](https://www.facebook.com/CMHA.NWV)

 [CMHA_NWV](https://twitter.com/CMHA_NWV)

 [cmhanorthwestvancouver](https://www.instagram.com/cmhanorthwestvancouver) **WE'RE ON INSTAGRAM!**

 northwestvancouver.cmha.bc.ca

CMHA NWV ANNUAL REPORT 2020–21

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MESSAGE

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

It's easy to say that we weren't prepared for the COVID-19 pandemic and that the year was grueling, challenging, and full of loss. These are true statements. At the same time, they are but one part of the narrative of 2020–21. What we also know, in our hearts and minds, is that the pandemic was also a great teacher. The lessons we were forced to learn, and the conditions we needed to adapt to, tested us and opened us up to different ways of living and working.

“What we know, in our hearts and minds, is that the pandemic was a great teacher.”

We learned that our work can be done differently. People can work more from home. People can adapt their work to their lives, slow down, and make time for personal interests. We learned that parents need more supports to balance the responsibilities of home and work. We learned that seniors are often underserved. And we learned that individuals who come here as immigrants or refugees with families that continue to live in other parts of the world often feel pulled in ways many Canadians cannot fathom.

At CMHA, we learned that our supportive housing sites need much more structure and funding if they are going to provide a safe home for clients and a safe workplace for staff. In February, we achieved Licensed status for our three VCH-contracted group homes. This represents an important milestone for our programs as we begin

to professionalize our care. Our homes are now staffed 24/7 and all homes are equipped with sprinklers. With more regular inspections, these homes will continue to evolve and the Canadian Mental Health Association North and West Vancouver Branch (CMHA NWW) team will build its capacity to help our clients improve their quality of life.

We learned that our programs can be delivered online or by phone, and that this helps us reach many new people in need. Our program manager, Elaina, saw an opportunity to expand our social support programming to serve those with chronic illness. The story of this group (page 6), which has grown to over 35 participants, is an excellent example of innovation and client-centred care for a group of people who have been underserved and often feel forgotten about.

Finally, what we learned over the last year was that our community needs CMHA NWW. In addition to housing, they need our programs and services. The community needs our low-cost, accessible, high-quality counselling services for adults and it needs more of it than we have been able to provide. Despite quadrupling our capacity over the last year due to government funding, we continue to manage an 8–12 week wait list.

“Our community needs CMHA NWW. In addition to housing, they need our programs and services.”

The community also needs our integrated, case managed outreach services. Despite CERB and other government supports, this year, we distributed approximately \$10,000 per month in rent supplements and over \$25,000 annually in non-housing supports. People from all over the North Shore and from all walks of life came to our offices to ask for help to secure or sustain their housing, help them with moving and travel expenses, and purchase tents or other materials to help them live safely outdoors or in RVs. As an essential service, we were there to greet them in person and always by phone or email.

“The community also needs our integrated, case managed outreach services.”

This year, we rebuilt our peer support curriculum for Indigenous communities in partnership with knowledge keepers, elders and experts. This program, called Community Wellness, has helped to transform our organization. As an organization with a profoundly diverse staff and board, we led many internal dialogues around decolonization and equity. We also moved into the communities to ask questions, expand our knowledge of mental wellbeing and build new relationships. These are the dialogues that will shape our next five years. Please join us!



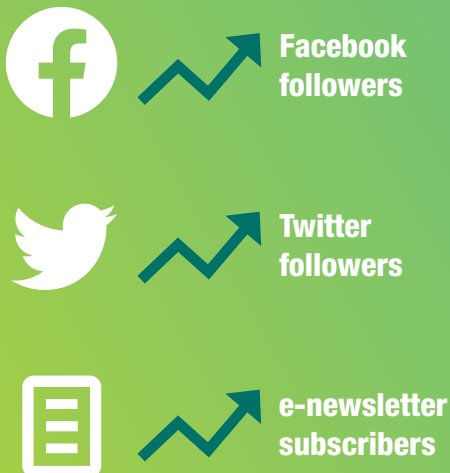
JOSHUA RADCLIFFE
Board Chair
CMHA NWV



JULIA KAISLA
Executive Director
CMHA NWV

YEAR AT A GLANCE*

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT



PROGRAM CLIENTS & PARTICIPANTS



* Compared to previous two years

INNOVATION IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

BY ELAINA, CMHA NWW PROGRAM MANAGER

Living with chronic pain and/or illness has an extraordinary impact on a person's mental health and quality of life. I know this all too well, as I have been living with chronic pain and complex chronic illness for over seven years. The pandemic, especially early on, has created significant challenges for people living with chronic pain and/or illness. These challenges include, but are not limited to, loss of home care, loss or decreased access to pain management services, limited access to food and essential items due to panic buying and demand for grocery delivery, exclusion from emergency government aid, increased pain and chronic disease symptoms, social isolation, and suicidal thoughts.

"It has been life changing for me to have an online support group. This is my first one and to be able to connect with other chronically ill persons has made me feel less alone."

I decided to reach out to pain clinics and chronic disease patient groups to gauge interest in virtual mental health support. In no time, the emails started rolling in from people eager to connect. The first chronic pain support group happened in April 2020 and it has been meeting biweekly on Tuesday afternoons ever since.

"I love this group ... I've come to understand so clearly how mental health and chronic pain are so interdependent and interconnected."

In group meetings, as participants check in and share their stories, the relaxing of shoulders and deep exhalations of relief are unmissable, even through the tiny Zoom boxes. One of the most difficult parts of living with chronic pain and/or illness is that most people don't understand it. There is a large difference between acute pain and/or illness, which everyone has experienced, and chronic pain and/or illness. Because the majority of people with chronic pain and/or illness look well most of the time, others just assume that everything is OK.

One in three Canadians live with chronic pain, yet it is still misunderstood and stigmatized. Group participants have shared with us that it's helpful to spend time with peers who understand chronic pain and/or illness and its complexity.

Peers understand that people with chronic pain and/or illness are not malingerers, have low pain tolerances, or are just bad at coping. They understand that most things take monumental effort and that just because a person with chronic pain and/or illness can do something one day, doesn't mean they can do it on another day. Peers understand that just because someone else had spinal surgery, for example, and is now fine, doesn't mean that those with chronic pain and/or illness should also be fine.

"This group has helped me enormously to maintain some semblance of social connection and alleviates the perception of feeling all alone living with chronic pain. The advice and reframing of situations or thoughts, and the gentle manner in which the group is guided and moderated, has been amazing."

Authenticity is the keystone of the chronic pain group—it is a safe environment where people can express how they are really doing, where there is no pressure to be a “good patient.” Participants are welcome to show up in their pajamas and join from wherever is most comfortable or wherever their condition has them stuck that day, whether that is a bed, La-Z-Boy, or bathroom floor. And in that freedom to be authentic often comes a healing balm—humor.

One participant jokes, “The dress code is bedhead and a double chin” while another highlights the importance of humor in coping stating, “We laugh about our brain fog, about ‘collecting’ diagnoses. It really helps to poke a

little fun at ourselves. You have to have a sense of humor about these things or you’ll just give up.”

Never having met each other in person hasn’t impeded participants’ abilities to create trusting and fulfilling relationships. As one participant told us, “We are like family to each other—there is only acceptance, hearing and understanding.”

Not only does the group provide participants with a safe, supportive community, it is also giving participants an opportunity to give back and build up their confidence and sense of purpose. Three group members recently took group facilitation training and are now sharing facilitation duties.

WHEN SOMETHING WONDERFUL HAPPENS

BY MARIA, CMHA NWV COUNSELLING MANAGER

I had a long term CMHA client who only checked in a few times a year. Let’s call her Sally. When the pandemic hit, she became housebound because of a chronic health condition. We did more frequent Zoom sessions but she was getting more depressed and anxious, wondering if she’d ever get out of her apartment again.

At the same time, I started counselling with a client who is trained as a peer supporter and runs one of our social support groups. Let’s call him Tom. I urged Sally to try this group, and she started painting with the group, over Zoom, once a week. This turned into daily painting practice. She *loved* it and felt connected to the group and discovered how talented she is. She told me that the group leader (Tom) had emailed her wonderful feedback about her art.

Later, in my counselling sessions with Tom, I learned about how meaningful the group is for him and how the structure of the weekly sessions and the connections with the participants have contributed to him staying well. He told me that one of his “star” participants is Sally!

This combined effort of counselling and peer support working together within the organization is profound. It is less expensive than longer term counselling, more sustainable over longer periods of time, and thus more client centered. A wonderful win-win for everyone.



HOUSING

2020–21 was challenging in multiple aspects for our housing programs. While the world was facing the challenge of a pandemic, we were trying to create new policies and procedures and create activities to keep our clients active and well. This was while managing COVID-19 risks for a vulnerable population and working hard to meet the licensing requirements for 24/7 mental health facilities (we achieved licensed status in February 2021).

We are focused on achieving the goals of creating sustainable programs to enhance quality of life and advocating for clients that are aging in place, which means they require more care and appropriate transitions when needed. We are committed to working on the dignity and respect that our residents deserve and continue advocating for better health services.

COVID-19 presented tremendous challenges for our housing residents and our staff. The team established

appropriate policies and procedures; obtained the required PPE; and maintained positive morale despite a stressful environment. We are happy to report that no residents received COVID-19 positive results despite close calls and exposures. Since the vaccine's approval, the team has worked untiringly to advocate for staff and clients to get vaccinated.

Looking back on the past year, we have learned many lessons about the importance of being proactive. We also look back with gratitude and believe we have the fortune to have a solid, compassionate, and committed team that is always available and willing to adapt to change.

A warm thank you to all the staff that continue working hard to make CMHA houses a safe, secure, and positive place for all the residents and other staff.

CMHA NWV operates 3 licensed mental health group homes:



Harold House

24-hour care to six women who are 50+ years of age



Arborlynn House

24-hour care to six young men ranging in age from 25–35 years and are dealing with serious mental illness and substance use issues.



Lillian House

24-hour care to seven men ranging in age from 45–65 years

CMHA NWV operates 3 Circle of Care group homes:



Two homes for men

ranging in age from 25–75 years of age



One home for women

housing 4 single women ages 30–50 and one woman-led family



CIRCLE OF CARE HOUSING PROGRAM

In partnership with faith communities and VCH's Health Connections Clinic, CMHA operates 3 Circle of Care supportive housing sites for 16 clients. All clients have a diagnosis of mental illness (PTSD, anxiety, depression, etc.) and have a history of or significant risk of homelessness.

The Circle of Care program continued to grow and this year. During the pandemic, CMHA NWW worked with our partners to open a second house for men in the Lynn

Valley area. In spring 2021, we opened a third home for women and one woman-led family. The houses opened the door for several new individuals and have been able to support them in multiple aspects of their spiritual, socioeconomic, and health journeys. Through a supportive environment and careful case planning, a total of 16 individuals in our Circle of Care homes can now gain a sense of stability and set goals to move forward with their lives and gain new basic skills.

(photo above) Celebrating the grand opening of the new Circle of Care housing site in June 2020

SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS

“With or without the pandemic, your services are priceless in all scenarios.”

—Social Support Group participant

In March 2020, we closed the Kelty Dennehy Mental Health Resource Centre, our hub for peer navigation and social support groups in response to COVID-19. Our staff and volunteers were quick to pivot and started offering services online and over the phone within two weeks of the closure.

Where others bemoaned the transition to online service delivery, our team thrived. Virtual technology enabled staff and volunteers to get creative and use their different skills and training. We provided new social support groups and wellness courses that we would not have

otherwise been able to provide in person due to space, travel, and schedule limitations.

We offered a large variety of peer-facilitated online groups and wellness courses (up to 15 at a time), including:

- Art therapy
- Circle of Hope Farsi speaking women’s group
- Mindful self-compassion
- Therapeutic journaling
- Spring gardening workshop
- Yoga
- Men Let’s Talk
- Pet therapy
- Guided meditation
- ... and many more!

As one client remarked, “Moving resources online is allowing people who would have no hope or ability to show up in person, to be included and participate. This is one silver lining of the pandemic.”



3,718 virtual connections over the year

and

391 average virtual connections per month

supported by staff and volunteers at the height of the pandemic



1,534 hours of service

gifted by our amazing social support group volunteers



Word cloud made from social support group participant feedback—the larger the word, the more times it was mentioned

“The Watercolour Class has been a very important part of my mental health therapy. I’ve been able to meet new people, learn a new skill, and find a safe place to go during some very difficult times. There’s no pressure put on anyone in the class which is perfect for newcomers and regulars ... I don’t know what I would have done without this class. Watercolour is a great way to relax the mind and it allows me to be productive which is so important when dealing with depression and anxiety.”

—Watercolour class participant

SUPPORTING THE SUNSHINE COAST

The past year was our first supporting the Sunshine Coast community. We realized right away that mental health and addiction supports and services on the coast were in high demand, and we had many people connecting with us right away.

We reached most people through our Drop-in Mental Health Navigation services located at the Salvation Army in Gibsons, where community members are welcome to drop in to talk, get information, learn about resources available in the community, and get support accessing them.



120+ people
reached by support
groups in the community



We also offered groups including SMART Recovery, WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Planning), and a Coping During COVID-19 course.

We have been working hard to collaborate with local social service organizations, the shíshálh Nation, the Sunshine Coast Community Action Team, and Vancouver Coastal Health to understand how we can be part of the team and help to fill gaps that exist.

400+ client visits
through our Drop-in Mental Health Navigation, Peer Navigation, and Outreach services in the community



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

The Honourable Mr. Justice Ward K. Branch and Catherine Branch generously contributed to our organization this year. We allocated their gift to our low and no-cost counselling program.

“Our family has a three-generation lived experience with mental health challenges. These became more acute when a member of our family fell seriously ill and was a danger to herself. The recommendation from health care professionals was to find a residential facility for her safety and treatment. We were not able to find an appropriate facility in Canada but were fortunate to be able to afford treatment in the US and she is better, although is continuing to manage her symptoms.

As a result of our experience, we began to look for ways that we could help the mental health situation in Canada. Catherine is now involved in a CMHA committee providing input on behalf of families. In the long term, we would like to do what we can to provide more accessible information for families looking for help and improve access to programs and facilities for young people in the 17–25-year-old age range.”

COUNSELLING



Our counselling program offers low-barrier (low-cost, self referral, no exclusion criteria) individual counselling sessions to adults. More vulnerable clients (e.g., homeless clients, people with severe chronic health issues, indigenous clients) are also able to access free counselling support.

Over the past year, we were able to significantly expand our counselling program for two reasons:

1. We received COVID-19 Surge Funding from the Provincial Government.
2. Due to a shift to virtual counselling, we no longer had office space restrictions.

Over the past year, we were able to hire three additional Registered Clinical Counsellors (RCCs), all working virtually, which added 28 hours of weekly counselling access, including service outside of regular office hours. Increased counselling staff means clients can work with counsellors who have different treatment approaches and offer various areas of expertise.

We learned that the shift to virtual counselling resulted in fewer clients who failed to keep their appointments or cancelled last minute, making us much more efficient. People who struggle with transportation, mobility issues, child care, and anxiety about leaving the house were delighted by the virtual service delivery.

However, we also learned that there are some people who don't have a safe and/or private place in their home and who had to do their counselling sessions from their car, closet, bathroom, park, bus, and even a broken tanning booth at work. There were also clients who did not have access to computers or smart phones and could not do online sessions.

We now have two RCCs qualified to train counselling practicum students. These are internships and in exchange for weekly supervision, students provide hundreds of hours of free counselling to our clients. Over the past year, we worked with seven from partner universities including UBC, Adler University, Yorkville University, and City University.

We continue to focus on providing longer term, wrap around support. This was needed during the past year when many other supports and resources such as

recreational centres and community support groups shut down. Although our counselling is only short term, we connect clients with our other services—both before counselling, while they are on our wait list, and after they finish counselling. These include individual peer support and online social support groups as well as free counselling at WorkBC for clients ready to return to work. Over the past year, we expanded our catchment area, making it possible for people outside of the North Shore to get counselling support.

We continue to struggle with counselling demand exceeding availability. Last year, we were hopeful that virtual counselling would help reduce the waiting list. Although we have seen many more clients, the demand for counselling has now doubled. This demand is being reported by other non-profit agencies throughout the province, as well as private counselling services.

TRYING SOMETHING NEW

COVID-19 forced us to try virtual counselling, and we want to continue to innovate. We have been piloting walking therapy sessions, or “walk and talk” as a client calls it. These are popular with many clients who like the exercise, who benefit from being in nature, who have COVID-19 concerns being inside, or who prefer not to face the therapist or be “trapped” in an office. They also have the added benefit of giving counsellors a break from their desk and from Zoom. Walking therapy is being studied and has some evidence base. It also fits in with our efforts, as an organizations, to decolonize, because the old power dynamic between a therapist and a client shifts when people are outside the office together, both huffing up a hill or petting a dog. We are planning to collect outcome data for this intervention starting in fall 2021, and hope to offer it officially in spring 2022.

OUTREACH SERVICES

Having a safe, affordable place to call home is an important component of our well being. Our outreach workers assist homeless and precariously housed people by connecting them with housing, community resources, economic and other supports.

CMHA NWW offers more than an outreach program— we have transformed the outreach services into a case management-focused approach with a client-centred delivery model. Outreach workers assess the client's needs and identify any psycho-social limitations, economic challenges, and barriers. The outreach worker and the client set a care plan based on the services available and the client's short and long-term goals.

This approach may limit the ability to serve more individuals, but it increases the possibility of keeping clients housed and supported. After addressing immediate physical and safety needs, we continue to support clients

after finding housing, including assisting with life skills like budgeting, groceries, and home maintenance.

The increase in cost of living and housing limitations across the North Shore are significant challenges for our outreach services. The pandemic opened the doors to unseen challenges such as mental health issues, substance use disorders, racial discrimination, limited support for abused victims still with the abuser, and little support for the LGBTQ+ community. This made our outreach services—which remained opened to the public by appointment throughout the year—both a challenging and a needed service.

Importantly, despite a doubling of staff capacity over the past year, we continued to turn away over 10 clients on the North Shore and up to 10 clients on the Sunshine Coast per month. We continue to advocate with our fundes to increase supports in our communities.



500 clients served

by our outreach team—
usually a team of 2



160 new clients

26 of them were on the Sunshine
Coast, our expanded catchment



27 clients housed

and

63 clients supported to stay housed
through rent supplements or other interventions

COMING SOON: PEER ASSISTED CARE TEAM (PACT)

Over the past year, CMHA NWW, in partnership with CMHA BC, began to work on launching a Peer Assisted Care Team (PACT) on the North Shore. The program will provide an alternative or auxiliary service to police response to crisis calls related to mental health and substance use.

PACT will pair a mental health professional with a trained peer crisis responder to provide trauma-informed, culturally safe support to North Shore residents, specifically those who are racialized and at a higher risk of experiencing distress.

Throughout 2020, building blocks were established to create a Community Planning Table that includes diverse representation from public bodies, community agencies, and North Shore residents. It includes representatives from the City and District of North Vancouver, North Vancouver RCMP Detachment, West Vancouver Police, North Shore Multicultural Society, Tsleil-Waututh Nation, and people with lived and/or living experience, as well as family members.

The program is set to launch in fall 2021.

PEER SUPPORT

PEER NAVIGATION

A Peer Navigator:

- Is someone you can talk to about the challenges you're facing—big or small
- Can offer a listening ear as well as information and resources
- Has lived experience with mental health challenges and can connect with you about your experiences and offer guidance on your journey.

During the pandemic, people lost many opportunities for connection. Our team of staff and volunteer Peer Navigators were there to offer a listening ear as well as information and resources online and via phone. They supported people struggling with a variety of challenges related to their mental health and the hardships of COVID-19 including social isolation, anxiety, work or school concerns, grief, transitions, chronic pain, relationships, and self-care in over 270 peer sessions over the past year.

We expanded our Peer Navigation team to include a group of five volunteers and peer support practicum students. This allowed us to reach more people in need of connection and increase the diversity of experience, skills, and knowledge across the team.

Over the past year, Peer Navigation has worked collaboratively with other CMHA departments to create “Pathways to Wellbeing” for peers. For example, our Peer Navigators have collaborated with counsellors to be a point of connection for people while they wait for their first counselling appointment and when they transition out of counselling. Peer Navigators have also helped peers to take on volunteer roles within CMHA and find community support through our online groups.

Beginning in fall 2021, our Peer Navigators will be on-site at the Keltly Dennehy Mental Health Resource Centre to

support people who drop in as well as by appointment, over the phone, and virtually. We are looking forward to this new hybrid way of working that allows us to reach those who live throughout the region, those who have barriers to visiting or travelling to the centre, and those who just prefer to connect online for any reason.

FAMILY NAVIGATION

Our Family Navigator works with parents and families of youth to help them navigate the mental health system, make referrals to programs and services, and advocate for families in times of need. Over the past year, our Family Navigator continued to work full-time online, over the phone, and in person.

Referral numbers continue to rise as the pandemic exponentially contributed to growth. Our Family Navigator has supported upwards of 400 families.

Over the past year, the definition of Family Navigation has stretched to not only include system orientation/direction and peer support, but to also include non-crisis based support, like Emotion Focussed Family Therapy Workshops, that enhances the quality of family life and builds resiliency from the inside out.

INDIGENOUS PEER SUPPORT

CMHA NWW received funding from BC Campus to review and expand our Indigenous Peer Support curriculum. Through meaningful engagement with Indigenous leaders and experts, we learned many new lessons around the importance of building programs from the ground up. Our team, including our new Indigenous Community Wellness Coordinator, created new modules and content with the community. CMHA NWW sits alongside the First Nations Health Authority, Tsleil-Waututh Nation, and Reciprocal Consulting at the Sub-Regional Indigenous Peer Support Steering Committee.

“My Peer Navigator was gentle, friendly, and guiding. We had shared experiences that helped us to bond. [Peer Navigation] provided structure to my early COVID-19 isolation days. It kept me focusing on the positives as well as sharing my story and I felt understood and heard. Being heard is such a healing thing. It felt exceedingly positive to see how much improvement I had made. It helped build confidence and I was ready for the next step in my journey.”

YOUTH PROGRAMS

PEER NAVIGATOR

CMHA NWW provides Peer Navigation for North Shore youth out of Foundry North Shore. Our Youth Peer Navigators assist youth age 12–24 experiencing mental health and addictions. The past year was especially challenging for youth who were managing many transitions, missing their friends and schoolmates, as well as activities in the community and at school. Youth Peer Navigators offered guidance, support, and hope through these challenges.



53 youth

supported by our two youth Peer Navigators

STEPS YOUTH PROGRAM

Steps is a nature-based recreation group for North Shore youth experiencing challenges with their mental health. The program goals focus on reducing participant's experiences of anxiety and depression through weekly physical activity and experiences in nature. CMHA NWW facilitates two cohorts: Steps for 13–18 year olds and Steps+ 19–29 year olds. Participants are also offered one-on-one support from peer support worker as needed.

Steps and Steps+ activities were offered once per week September 2020 to June 2021. Due to pandemic-related restrictions, the Steps program was also delivered virtually

when the group was unable to meet in person and group size was restricted to 10 participants.

The program this year focused on getting out into nature as much as possible and had a reduced number of indoor and hands-on activities. In-person group activities included hikes, nature walks, art classes, yoga and dance workshops, and coffee/ice cream walks.

Virtual activities ranged from presentations on mental health related topics to virtual group activities and games to casual hot chocolate nights.

We partnered with organizations including Foundry North Shore, North Vancouver Recreation and Culture, Polygon gallery and Power to Be.

Steps program (13–18 years old)

15 participants registered for Steps

34 sessions of the Steps program

74 hours of peer support in the Steps program



Steps+ program (19–29 years old)

14 participants registered for Steps+

30 sessions of the Steps+ program

62 hours of peer support in the Steps+ program

“He really enjoyed the program and we’re really proud of his openness to make new connections. Will he be able to register for the next year? Will you be running the program again? Please send a big thank you and goodbye to the group and to you for running such a great program!” —Parents of a Steps participant

(photo right) Steps youth participants on a rock climbing trip



EMPLOYMENT

CMHA NWV partners with North Shore Multicultural Services and the YWCA to deliver employment support at the North Shore WorkBC site. This year, the North Shore site embarked on year two of a new 5-year contract, and it was a time of profound employment stress for many people.

CMHA NWV plays an important role in this contract. As employment is a social determinant of health, not only is income essential to wellbeing, but work also creates purpose and belonging. CMHA has four staff that work as part of the WorkBC team, including two Case Managers, a Customized Employment Specialist and a Registered Clinical Counsellor. The team receives operational supervision from the lead agency, the YWCA.

TRAINING

Our robust community and workplace training program grinded to a halt in April 2020. Once it became evident that the pandemic wasn't going to last a few short months, our educators participated in several "upskills" sessions where they learned best practices and techniques for facilitating engaging workshops online. In the fall, the Mental Health Commission of Canada released a virtual version of Mental Health First Aid Basic, which we were able to start offering in December.

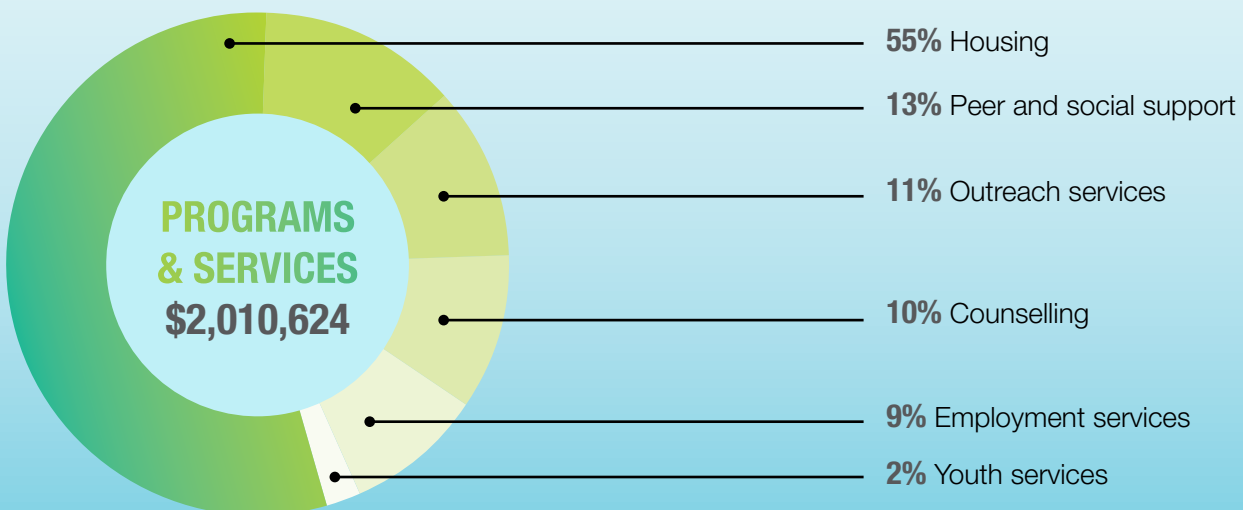
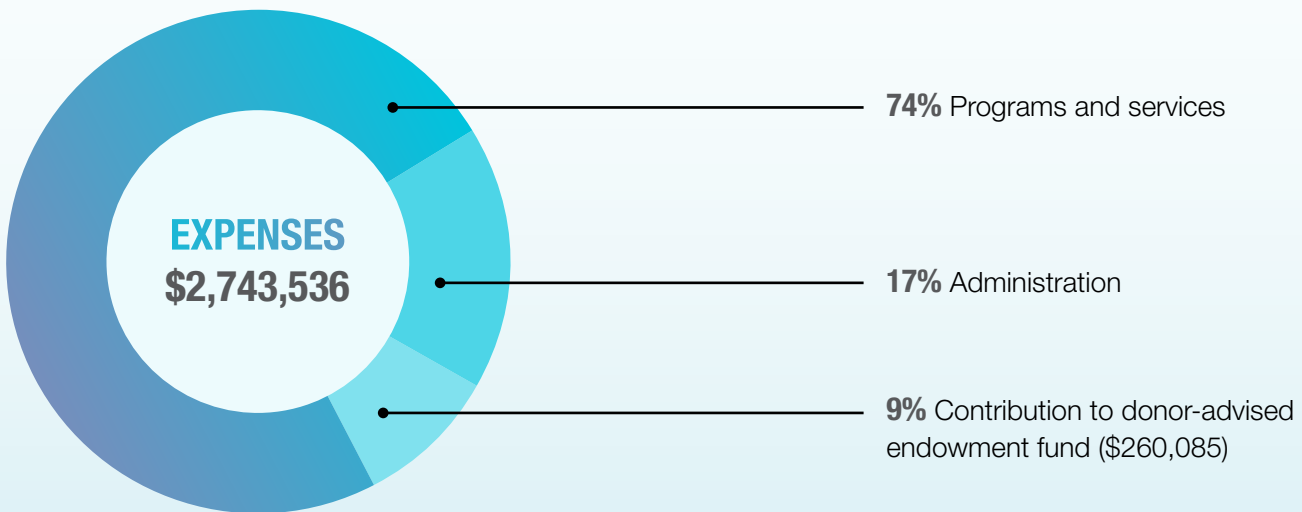
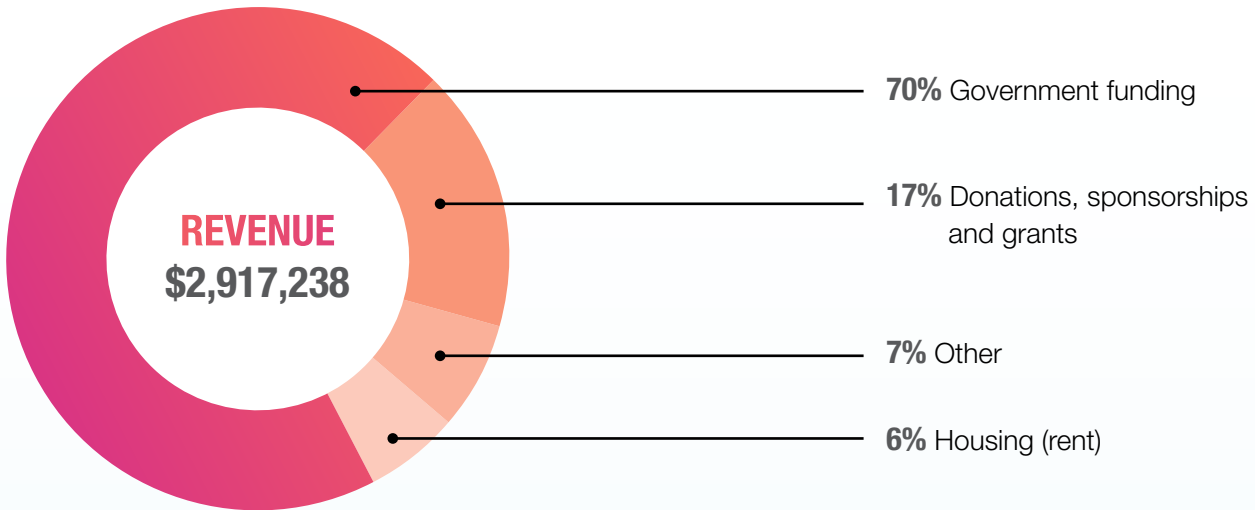
Between May 2020 and March 2021, 139 community members participated in virtual Mental Health First Aid and customized training.

Because the pandemic produced unique circumstances for the workforce such as mass layoffs, working remotely and increased stress, most of the workshops we offered were custom training sessions to provide staff skills to support their own mental wellness. One of our educators, who is a counsellor by training, facilitated workshops on stress management, supporting emotional wellness using dialectical behaviour therapy skills, and suicide awareness and prevention.

In October 2020, we hosted Mental Health First Aid training in Powell River for free thanks to a donation by White LeBlanc Wealth Planners. The training filled up in just 2 days and those who were not able to participate have requested another training as soon as possible.



FINANCIALS



THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS, SPONSORS, AND SUPPORTERS

“We are all in this together” is a phrase we have heard a lot over the past year. It reminds us that our work is to create a broadly inclusive, compassionate community that upholds everyone’s significance.

Our community extends into the governments, businesses, foundations, other organizations, community friends and individual donors who made financial and in-kind contributions that make our work viable. From providing beautiful holiday meals to amplifying and

breaking the silence around mental health through fundraising events to recognizing the value of our programs and giving generously, your assistance not only provides vital material support, but also give us confidence and security of not being alone in this work.

A heartfelt thanks for nurturing and supporting our organization and contributing to community wellbeing. We appreciate you!

GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

BC Housing
City of North Vancouver
Community Action Initiative
District of North Vancouver
District of West Vancouver
Government of British Columbia
Government of Canada
Vancouver Coastal Health
WorkBC

FOUNDATION SUPPORT

Benevity
Canada Gives
Canada Helps
Fiera Capital Foundation: The Walsh Foundation
GiftFunds Canada—The Wheelbarrow Fund
Lions Gate Hospital Foundation
North Shore Community Foundation
Pacific Blue Cross Health Foundation
RBC Foundation—RBC Youth Mental Well-Being Program
Squamish Community Foundation
Vancity Community Foundation
Vancouver Foundation
West Vancouver Community Foundation
Whistler Community Foundation

BUSINESS SUPPORT

Coast Capital Savings
COWS Inc. Whistler
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HollisWealth/White LeBlanc Wealth Planners
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Kuo Hua Trading
Lawson Lundell LLP
NoodleBox Squamish
Ouest Business Solutions
Sarah Symes
Summit Labels
The Co-operators
The Hackery
The Strongman Group
TransLink
Whistler Brewing Co.

ORGANIZATIONS

100 Women Who Care of the NorthShore
BCcampus
Capillano Christian Community
Health Connections Clinic North Shore
Lu’ma Native Housing Society
MTO Shahmaghsoudi School of Islamic Sufism
North Shore Alliance Church
Shelter to Home
Taiwanese Economic and Cultural Office
The Polygon Gallery
United Way of the Lower Mainland
Youth and Philanthropy Initiative Canada

And a big thank you to our many individual donors!



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
North and West Vancouver
Mental health for all

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