

Guiding Lights

Supporting Social Chronic Clients in North Vancouver through Peer Mentorship

A CityStudio project one-pager by Kirsten Marr, Sam Uppal and Jacqueline Pilcher.

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Background:

The North Vancouver RCMP are seeking to improve their stakeholder engagement strategies to address the issue of social chronic clients within their North Vancouver jurisdiction.

Relevance to City Goals:

This project relates directly to the City of Vancouver's priority of building a city for the people by aligning with the goal of developing and adopting a Community Well-Being Strategy.

Overview of the project:

Our recommendation is to develop a peer mentorship program to aid social chronic clients in identifying and navigating the appropriate programs available to them through the CMHA and ultimately find employment.

Project Details:

The completed program would be implemented in three stages:

1. Recruitment and training of the peer mentors.
2. Adapt CMHA's existing programs to meet the specific needs of social chronic clients.
3. Collaborate with local businesses to identify and create opportunities for employment for individuals with criminal records.

Key findings:

- A study in 2013 also concluded that peer support models along with support services resulted in an increase in the quality of life and decrease in involvement in the criminal justice system in people experiencing homelessness (Bean, Shafer, & Glennon, 2013).
- Research has proven that "shifting integrated mental health care to the community is unequivocally the most sensible economic decision, as community mental health services are up to five times less expensive than hospital-based care" (Malachowski, 2019).

Next steps / Future research:

The next steps for the RCMP and CMHA would be:

1. Develop a training program for newly hired peer mentors
2. Contact and recruit potential candidates for the peer mentor program
3. Work with the newly hired peer mentors to adapt the existing CMHA programs to attend to any specific needs of the social chronic clients that have not yet been addressed.

This student project was developed as part of a CityStudio North Vancouver course collaboration.

Staff partner(s): Adele Therias
Instructor(s): Laurie Prange
Course: Business & Society BADM 460-81

Pitch Transcript

Imagine a society that fosters growth when its members are struggling.

Hello, my name is Jacqueline, and I will be speaking on behalf of my partners Kirsten and Sam about our project Guiding Lights.

Our objective was to develop a stakeholder engagement plan that will result in addressing the needs of social chronic clients in such a way as to prevent future interactions with law enforcement.

Our research found that peer mentorship programs and supporting the holistic needs of individuals has a proven track record in both mental health settings and in reducing recidivism rates.

As such, we are recommending that the North Vancouver RCMP develop a peer mentorship program in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association.

The peer mentors will aid the social chronic clients in identifying and navigating the appropriate programs available to them through the CMHA and ultimately find employment.

Breaking the offending cycle is a challenging experience so it is important that social chronic clients have a mentor that has been in their shoes to help them create connections.

Do you want to be a guiding light?