



Homelessness Action Week and Connect Day Report 2022

Overview

With COVID restrictions gone this year, the North Shore Homelessness Task Force (NSHTF) was excited to return to Connect Day and Homelessness Action Week (HAW) events in full swing again. This year we were able to have four events for the community. We were able to sponsor two community meals with Sharing Abundance and St. Andrew's United Church thanks to support from the Strengthening Communities' Services grant; we were able to host a Harm Reduction and Naloxone training workshop in partnership with the North Vancouver City Library and Vancouver Coastal Health's Overdose Emergency Response Team; and in addition to these HAW events, we also hosted our annual Connect Day with the aim to provide services, information, some light food and refreshments, and community connection in support of our unhoused and vulnerably housed community members here on the North Shore.

We extend our warmest thanks to the many volunteers, partners, supporters, local businesses and individuals who donated their time, money, services, food and products making HAW events possible.

Community Meals

On Tuesday, October 11th Sharing Abundance hosted a community meal as part of HAW. Though they host this meal every Tuesday as part of their regular programming, the NSHTF was able to sponsor the cost of the meal through the support of the Strengthening Communities' Services grant. This enabled Sharing Abundance to provide a fan favourite meal- meatloaf, roasted potatoes, veggies and dessert! The financial support also provided grocery store gift cards for the community meal participants. Sharing Abundance served 103 meals, with about 20% of their guests being new to their program. They were excited that these individuals were able to discover a new weekly meal outlet. Feedback on the meal was strong and positive, and they were especially grateful for the comfort food. Thank you so much to Sharing Abundance for putting this together!

On Friday, October 14th, St. Andrew's United Church provided a one-off sit-down Thanksgiving meal for the community as well. This meal was also generously sponsored by the Strengthening Communities' Services grant. Here's a write up from their Community Outreach Coordinator Kay about how the meal went:

The Thanksgiving meal for Homelessness Action Week was well received and well attended! We had around 70 to 80 people in attendance, the majority of which came between 12 and 1 o'clock. We had 10 volunteers that helped us serve ham, scalloped potatoes, honey glazed carrots and sweet corn. There were also 5 students from Alcuin that helped us serve. We handed out plenty of tasty pies with whip cream as well. The guests seemed very grateful to have a place to chat and enjoy a hot meal, and were excited to continue coming to the free community meal hosted every Thursday. The grocery gift cards were well received. St. Andrew's was honored to give back to the community for an important week of action.

A huge thank you to all of the volunteers, staff, and support of Sharing Abundance and St. Andrew's United Church for making these community events happen!

Harm Reduction and Naloxone Training

On Thursday, October 13th Vancouver Coastal Health's Overdose Emergency Response Team hosted a Harm Reduction Education and Naloxone training workshop for 25 community members at the North Vancouver City Library. This training was open to the public and was extremely successful, with both the registration and waitlist filling up. The training was an hour and a half long and included an education portion on the principles of harm reduction and a workshop section on practicing administering naloxone with test kits. The training was hosted by a harm reduction outreach worker, a nurse, and a peer worker who were able to assist participants in their practice. A huge thank you to Vancouver Coastal Health's Overdose Emergency Response Team for hosting the workshop and to the North Vancouver City Library for providing the space. This event was so successful and well received that the North Vancouver City Library is definitely planning on hosting another workshop in the near future.

Connect Day 2022

This year's Connect Day was held on Thursday, October 13th from 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. in the Shipyard's Pipeshop at the base of Lonsdale. We hosted around 130 participants throughout the day. A huge thank you to the City of North Vancouver for graciously helping facilitate the event space. The Shipyard's Pipeshop was a beautiful, accessible location that provided plenty of space and ventilation for the event, and we are so grateful to have been able to host Connect Day there.

We extend our warmest thanks to the many volunteers, partners, supporters, and individuals who donated their time, money, services, food and products towards making Connect Day possible. Thank you to our wonderful volunteers and volunteer coordinator for helping all of our vendors get set up, welcoming participants in, hosting the giveaway and food table, and helping with clean up. We could not have done it without you! We would also like to thank North Shore Neighbourhood House for the use of their tables, chairs, and amazing volunteers. They were instrumental in facilitating the event. **Finally, we would like to thank Vancity, Vancouver Coastal Health, The Council of Community Homelessness Table, NexGen Hearing, and Guli Matadali for their generous financial contributions and donations towards the event. With their financial contributions, we were able to purchase grocery store gift cards to distribute to participants. We would also like to extend a huge thank you to Eighties Restaurant for their generous donation of 200 cornbread muffins, Human-Kind, Virani for their generous donation of 50 pizzas, and SPARC BC for their generous donation of goodies to distribute including socks, phones with credit, gift cards, deodorant, toques, gloves, hand and foot warmers, and shaving razors. A huge thank you also to North Shore Foot Care for providing complimentary footcare services for 20 customers throughout the event, and to PEDAL society for providing complimentary bike repair.**

We had many wonderful organizations at Connect Day this year. To begin,

- **The Salvation Army** provided generous amounts of food including bananas, coffee and tea, cookies and crackers, gift vouchers and sleeping bags
- **Indigenous Innovations** provided information about their wonderful health services in the community
- **St. Andrew's United Church** provided warm socks and information about their meal programs
- **North Shore Housing Centre** provided shelter information services, care packages with hygiene and cold weather supplies, peer program sign up, and outreach support
- **CMHA and their Peer Assisted Care Team** provided self care package for clients plus program information
- **North Shore Crisis Services Society** provided goodies and information about their services
- **Squamish Nation** provided goodies and outreach and event information about their services

- **Hollyburn Family Services** provided coffee, snacks, care packages and information about their services
- **North Shore Neighbourhood House** provided information about their services in addition to all of the help they contributed towards facilitating the event
- **Want2 app and Street to Home** provided information about their Life Intentions Action Planner which contains information about resources across Metro Vancouver
- **Nexgen Hearing** provided gift bags, earplugs, information about their services, and coupons to their services
- **NVRC** had skate and swim vouchers and information services
- **North Vancouver City Library** provided free books and their mobile library book bike
- **Shelter to Home** provided information about their services alongside small homeware items
- **District of West Vancouver** provided care packages alongside information about their shower program at the West Vancouver Community Centre
- **North Shore Women's Centre** provided goodies and information about their services
- **Family Services North Shore** provided plentiful warm wears for the wintertime alongside goodies and information about their services
- **NSEM** provided first aid kits and information about emergency safety across the North Shore
- **North Vancouver Foot Care** provided 30-minute foot care session providing nail trimming, foot filing, nail management, light massage, foot health assessment and client education as needed
- **PEDAL society and Our Community Bikes** provided complimentary bike repair to clients and provided information about their community services

We would like to thank all organizations in attendance for their time, contributions, and continued work on the North Shore. After two long years of the pandemic, it was wonderful to hear about the ways these organizations continue to support so many in our community. Thank you to all of our partners for the goodies, services, warm clothes, gift cards, health supplies, information, and outreach you brought to the event. Our community is indebted to you!

We had great feedback at the event from participants. So many individuals shared their gratitude for the goodies that were handed out and for the opportunity to connect with various service providers. Thank you to every single person who attended and participated for making this such a successful day!

