



Family Caregivers of British Columbia

Navigating the Healthcare System

The Home and Community Care program (HCC) of the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) provides community-based health services intended to support people with acute or chronic illness or a physical disability to remain at home, as independently as possible.

The services that a client is eligible for are based on a standard assessment of needs, may be provided on a short or long term basis and may be subsidized according to the client's income or provided at no cost. Similar services are provided by the other health authorities throughout BC.

HCC services for eligible clients are delivered by teams of healthcare professionals. Below is a list of some of these health care professionals and the services they provide.

Case managers conduct assessments to determine eligibility for home supports, suitability for adult day programs or placement in assisted living and residential care facilities. They will work with the client and their family to address his or her health care goals. Case managers also provide ongoing coordination of services.

Liaison case managers work in the hospital to organize the community supports necessary to discharge clients safely home or assess for residential facility care placement from a hospital stay.

Home support (community health workers) provide in-home care to assist individuals to continue living independently in their home and provide respite to family caregivers. They offer personal assistance with bathing, dressing, grooming, hygiene and toileting.

Community rehabilitation services provide home-based physiotherapy and occupational therapy services in order to help a person to remain living at home safely.

Adult day programs provide support in a group setting for older adults, especially those with chronic illness or cognitive impairments. Day centers offer opportunities to socialize, have a hot meal and participate in recreational and health maintenance activities.

Victoria Innovative Seniors Treatment Approach (VISTA) offers a program for seniors experiencing day to day problems with the misuse of alcohol and/or prescription drugs, or elder abuse issues.

Clinical nutritionists help a person to maintain optimal nutritional health while living at home by providing assessment, consultation and education.

Quick Response Team provides crisis intervention at home to eligible clients when required aimed at preventing avoidable hospital admission, provide crisis intervention at home and to facilitate early hospital discharge. The QRT team includes physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social workers, nurses and home support workers.

Anyone can make a referral to the Home and Community Care program. Each region of VIHA has a HCC General Enquiries Line. If you live in the South Island region call 250-388-2273, Central Island 250-734-4101 or North Island 250-898-2255. The above information can be found in more detail on the VIHA website at www.viha.ca/hcc/. This website also includes a helpful booklet that you can download entitled, *Home and Community Care, A Guide to Your Care*.

For additional assistance in navigating the healthcare system and finding the resources that you need, you can also call us at the Family Caregivers' Network Society at 250-384-0408. FCNS is offering a workshop for family caregivers on April 4 entitled Navigating the Healthcare System. Visit www.familycaregiversnetwork.org for more details.

By Barbara Small, Program Development Coordinator, Family Caregivers' Network Society