



The **CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER** is a collaboration between residents, families, and staff that aims to create connections across the Long-Term Care and Assisted Living community within Vancouver Coastal Health. It is an opportunity to share meaningful stories and celebrate what makes long-term care and assisted living special, bringing to reality the spirit of living meaningfully in community with dignity, connection and well-being.

If you want to subscribe to receive a digital copy of the Connections Newsletter, share feedback, or request your home and/or your story be shared next, please send an email to:

VCH-LTC-Connections@vch.ca



GETTING TO KNOW THE COMMUNITY

Home Profile: Hilltop House in Squamish



Established in 1984, Hilltop House is a long-term care home situated near Behrner Drive in Squamish, home to 85 residents. Hilltop prides itself on fostering a strong community atmosphere and many staff members have longstanding ties with residents' families and friends even before their arrival. The facility boasts scenic surroundings, with views of the Stawamus Chief, Shannon Falls Provincial Park, Howe Sound, and the Coast Mountains.

There are five enclosed outdoor spaces at Hilltop, including a spacious ground-floor courtyard used for summer events like live music and barbecues. There is also a thriving vegetable garden tended to by residents and volunteers, offering fresh produce for the residents.

Residents engage in monthly bus outings to various local attractions such as the Sea to Sky Gondola (see picture above), Cheekeye Ranch Horse Sanctuary, restaurants, performing arts, and shopping. Scenic drives to places like Porteau Cove, Tantalus Range, Paradise Valley, and local farms are also facilitated by the Recreation Team. These outings are possible due to the fundraising efforts of the Hilltop House Support Society, specifically for a wheelchair-accessible 10-seater bus. Hilltop values its partnership with the Lil'Wat Nation and Squamish Nation, hosting monthly gatherings for Elders to share stories and enjoy catered lunches.

The facility also provides quality care and services, including a regularly used salon and access to a dental suite when needed, ensuring the well-being and comfort of all residents.



FROM THE VOICES OF RESIDENTS

Resident Profiles: In the next five years, what are things you want to see **CHANGE** or **KEEP THE SAME** in long-term care or assisted living?

ALAN



GERMAN-CANADIAN
CARE HOME

ALAN is 93 years young and was born and raised in Vancouver. Growing up, he had six siblings and came from a military family. Later, he was married and his wife and him had two children.

One thing to keep the same is intellectual property and orderly objectives. The staff are organized, they say what they will do, and the level of care is above and beyond. Also, the food is great – if he asks for bacon, he gets bacon. Alan also enjoys reading and getting sun.

One thing to change would be more engaging conversations with eye-contact and receptivity. He recognizes the care staff are busy, but it would be nice to know people on a first name basis and build meaningful relationships, especially in the kitchen during meal time!

DENIS



GERMAN-CANADIAN
CARE HOME

DENIS will be turning 80 years old this year. He was born in Alberta, also called Cowtown. During the recession in 1950's, Denis's dad took all of his six children and moved them to the United States, so he grew up in the sunny state of California, listening to Beach Boys.

One thing to keep the same would be the recreational activities. Denis enjoys music and art in general, and he participated in the art program at German-Canadian Care Home. He also likes watching sports and participating in less strenuous activities. Denis enjoys German-Canadian as it's 'really interesting with lots of great interactions!'

RICHARD



GERMAN-CANADIAN
CARE HOME

RICHARD was born and raised in Mayerthorpe, Alberta, a farming town near Edmonton. He was a trouble maker in his younger years with a very colourful past. Vancouver is now his home and feels everyone at German-Canadian is "one happy family!" He enjoys helping other residents and how everyone looks after each other. He finds a sense of community vital. Richard previously created *Dudes Club* where men from the Downtown East Side could connect and lean on one another.

One thing to keep would be meaningful conversations and discussion groups around current events. One thing to change would be access to a swimming pool. It's great for the body and a nice way to cool down!



FROM THE VOICES OF RESIDENTS

Resident Profiles: In the next five years, what are things you want to see **CHANGE** or **KEEP THE SAME** in long-term care or assisted living?

BUD



GERMAN-CANADIAN
CARE HOME

BUD was born in Kirkland Lake, a small mining community in Ontario. He is an only child and was raised in a military family. Bud spent 31 years in the Air Force as a pilot and senior officer and was also a ski instructor in Whistler for three years after first moving to BC. He was happily married for 68 years with four kids; 8 grandkids, 9 great-grandkids, and his wife passed four years ago at the age of 91.

Some things to keep the same are the connection with staff and the Music Therapy program. There is exceptional interface between the residents and care aides. Everyone is very helpful, which is important for ongoing resident care. Music Therapy is tremendous and Bud loves hearing the piano.

Some things to change would be: securing and allocating funding for rehabilitation programs to help residents get better faster and more variety for pureed foods. German-Canadian has a bicycle but more railings for holding would be helpful. This would help residents get better, faster! And food can't be the same for everybody and a little variety would help those with different needs.

JOANNE



GERMAN-CANADIAN
CARE HOME

JOANNE grew up in Toronto and was the second oldest of eight siblings. She has two children and enjoys being at German Canadian because residents help each other here. "It's like a family home. It's also a beautiful property!" Previously, Joanne was in a wheelchair due to a brain injury, but when she got better the staff noticed her progress and moved her into a different neighborhood!

One thing to keep the same would be the kitchen, which is outstanding and very accommodating for taste and needs.

During Joanne's free time, she enjoys art, music, and being outdoors. There is a beautiful garden here! She also likes her own space and enjoy being alone, so she doesn't participate in all activities. Joanne lived in the country where she walked to the post office once a week to get outside and that's enough for her.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT VCH?

Strategic Plan for Long-Term Care and Assisted Living for 2024-2029

VCH delivers care to over 7,500 people who live in long-term care and/or assisted living homes across the region. Long-term care and assisted living are essential parts of healthcare in BC for those over 19 years old with the average residents and clients being 84 years old.

Over the summer, VCH heard from over 700 residents, clients, families, and caregivers who participated in an online survey campaign or an in-person focus group (see picture on the right) at participating care homes. The diverse feedback shared will guide VCH's roadmap for the next five years and shape the future of long-term care and assisted living.

The common themes that emerged will be brought to back to our homes and partners to implement focused changes and preserve the successes already in place, ensuring work reflects the people VCH serves.



2SLGBTQIA+ Canada Pride - Infinite Horizons

Since June, many 2SLGBTQIA+ communities have been celebrating and continue to celebrate Pride. VCH has been happy to support opportunities for residents and clients to participate, as a part of a commitment to ensuring inclusive, safe, and quality care to all.

On August 4th, VCH participated in the 2024 Canada Pride Parade in Vancouver, with the theme of Infinite Horizons, "a forward-looking perspective, celebrating the boundless possibilities that lie ahead for all members of our community." Nearly 30 residents, families, and staff from long-term care and assisted living registered to walk alongside the VCH float or in the accessible bus. Others took advantage of the opportunity to join virtually, via Zoom, displayed live on the parade float to the crowd.

VCH continues to support homes in creating safer spaces for gender diversity with resources available upon request.

**Long-term care
is working to
create safer
spaces for
2SLGBTQIA+
people.**



PROUD TO SERVE THE
2SLGBTQIA+
COMMUNITY

Vancouver
CoastalHealth

