

## CHA - Report to the Annual General Meeting

From : Community Health Advocate Coordinator : Brenda Kent

Since starting the project on July 6th, 1998, the following has been accomplished :

- ☞ Extensive planning of the project from beginning to the end of March, 1999
- ☞ Direct contact through site visits to 9 community organizations
- ☞ Seminar at the BC Centre of Excellence on "Women-Centred Care"
- ☞ Focus group through about a community health clinic for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, coordinated through The Centre (formerly the Gay and Lesbian Centre)
- ☞ Two initial meetings with the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board Evaluation coordinator with respect to our intensive evaluation
- ☞ Research for the CHA Manual and development of an outline
- ☞ Collection of 'case-studies' of successful community-based advocacy/health projects
- ☞ Job posting for a second trainer developed and vastly distributed (to be hired in late-October)
- ☞ 2 promotional flyers about the project done and distributed. Brochure is on the way!
- ☞ And I put around the office, doing that office stuff!

From all of the above, I have learned :

- ☞ There is a LOT of abuse and disrespect in the health care system!!! We have a lot of work to do.
- ☞ The people in the service industry are so passionate about what they do they they welcome any new idea with open arms! I have been overwhelmed by the support for this project.
- ☞ That the VWHC is on the right track! Oh yes....absolutely.

Also, I have learned that :

- ☞ To keep a project going, you need passion and dedication of volunteers and staff. Well done all you *wonderful* women!
- ☞ We need to do a better job at documenting our history
- ☞ We need to do regular and consistent networking. I heard from several people - "Oh! The Collective! I haven't heard from you women in a long time!"
- ☞ I love what I do...it makes me tick. Thank you for giving me this opportunity!

And the big news is.....I have four women confirmed (almost) as CHAs!

1. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered (LGBT)Community
2. South Asian Women
3. Two women from DAWN Canada (Disabled Women's Network)

I record all of my site visits and other CHA information in the White/Red binder at the Info Centre desk. Anyone interested in accompanying me on site visits are more than welcome! Just let me know in advance and check the book for meeting dates and locations.

The Community Health Advocacy (CHA) Project seeks to address the barriers women face in accessing safe, respectful, and appropriate health care

## Community Health Advocates will...

- ☞ raise awareness of the health care needs of the women in their communities
- ☞ educate women in their rights in the health care system
- ☞ help women develop tools to access proper health care