

Community Health Advocate Report to the Steering Committee

May 1999

Our First Week

- Angela and Lara started work May 3rd and received an orientation around basic telephone answering procedures, office meetings and schedule setting.
- Lara will be a support for the CHA project. Her tasks will include: researching Sarah Harrison's CHA manual recommendations, revisiting the eating disorder information, providing support in the CHA training, along with various collective tasks to be defined by the solidarity committee.
- Over the next week or so, Caryn and Angela will help Lara develop a task list to incorporate into a practicum contract that Lara will write up for the collective and for UVic. In order for UVic to give credit for the practicum, Lara also needs to consult with a social worker. Because Caryn and Angela do not have a BSW, Lara is proposing that Luanne Leclair (who was the social work consultant during Lara's third year placement) take on this role. The consultant social worker provides a support function to ensure Lara has someone to discuss and help her link social work theory and practice learning. The consultant social worker does not participate in the evaluation process.
- Angela and possibly Lara, will be attending the May 6th meeting for Health Services for Women in the Downtown East Side.
- Over the next couple of weeks, Angela and Lara will be orientating ourselves with the CHA coordinator's manual established by Brenda.
- We received the interm evaluation and the April 7th Focus Meeting Minutes from Diana Ellis. The minutes identified the following:
 - a greater need for CHA training
 - the need for a more practical manual
 - CHA's time commitment is greater than anticipated and there is a need for further compensation
 - advocates are doing more work outside of specific health issues/ doctors and health concerns
 - a need for information around welfare advocacy, social housing, poverty and disability issues was identified and this will be addressed in the training package
- Angela and Lara plan on making arrangements to meet separately with the health advocates in their communities.

Angela's contract

The contract is designated for 6 months (April 1st-Sept. 30th) until funding is secured. Given that Angela's start date was May 3rd, there is an extra 40 hours remaining in the budget. Angela is purposing that these hours be used when the project requires greater coordinator hours i.e. around training, the evaluation process and securing funding resources.

Monthly Meeting

Monday May 3rd, a CHA meeting was held at the collective. Unfortunately only two of the CHA's attended (Ahlay and Sadie), along with Brenda, Angela and Lara. The discussion concentrated on the focus debrief held by Diana Ellis with particular emphasis on additional training and manual updates. A copy of the focus debrief minutes is attached. We are looking at a mid-June training schedule. There was also some discussion about a volunteer appreciation evening and diversity training for the info centre volunteers. The social and info centre training will be discussed further when Anna-Lisa returns.