

## Community Health Advocate Report to the Steering Committee

*Submitted by Brenda Kent*

*March 8<sup>th</sup>, 1999*

Sorry for getting this report in late. I was sick last week and....well...didn't plan ahead as well as I would have liked. Sorry for any inconvenience.

Please see my letter of resignation included in the package. We need to discuss at the SC meeting what we were going to do to get someone managing the project until the new staff person is hired.

### **CHA Monthly Meetings**

- ☞ We have had meetings for the CHAs in Jan, Feb and March. At these meetings, the CHAs share their stories of what has been happening in their communities with their advocacy work. As it stands, most are fully engaged in their advocacy activities right now. There are a few that are having some trouble getting the word out that they are available, but they have received some calls/drop-ins.
- ☞ Angela Gray has been attending the CHA meetings in Feb and March. Thanks Angela - it is nice to have collective volunteers/staff and the CHAs meet!
- ☞ They have been submitting their tracking sheets and journal entries outlining their contact with women in their communities - it is getting interesting to see what issues are brought up. I can see some definite changes already to the training process due to the issues that women have (ie disability benefits).
- ☞ The next meeting is the focus group with the CHAs and the evaluator on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1999. This is probably the only meeting where staff/volunteers are will not be invited to take part because they will need to be candid about their experience and feel comfortable doing so.

### **Media**

Sarah has been contacting media about the project and have received some interest and we have both been doing follow-up with various media groups. The Van Echo did an article on March 3<sup>rd</sup> (please see attached). The Vancouver Sun, Langara Gleanor, and the UBC newspaper are interested in writing something up. Perhaps we will look to radio and other

media next. Thanks to Sarah for helping get the word out! Thanks to Christine and Tamara FP for organizing the Courier Ad on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Looks good!

## Van/Rich Health Board SHOWCASE EVENT

The Showcase event was on February 24<sup>th</sup>. This was to celebrate all of the projects that were funding with the CHIF funding last year. I put together a poster (which took much longer than I thought, but was kinda fun to do) which I have hung in the hallway between the offices. It was an interesting event and good learning to talk to the other groups and discussed challenges/successes, etc.

Thanks to Sarah, Hana, and Sonia for joining me at the event!

## Evaluation

The evaluation is in full swing right now. Diana Ellis met with me last week for a couple of hours to go over project records. She will be conducting the interview with me on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, and the focus group and interviews with the CHAs will happen early April. (We need to discuss staff/volunteer support for this period. It may not be wise to leave things hanging during the period of the project evaluation.)

## Other things

- ☞ Elena St.John has translated the CHA brochure into Spanish. I have been re-typing and laying out the brochure so it is consistent with the English brochures. Will be available soon!
- ☞ I have been busy re-connecting with our community partners and sending them the most current information on CHA for their info and distribution.
- ☞ I will be giving a brief talk with Tamara FP on the VWHC and CHA on Friday, March 12<sup>th</sup>.
- ☞ I tried to schedule a meeting with the CHA Advisory Committee (external committee that gives insight into the project from a community perspective). We had met before the training last year and I tried to have us meet in February, but it was not a good time for most. I think additional recruitment of CHAAC members will have to happen this spring/summer.
- ☞ I have put a ton of information together in a CHA Coordinator's Book. This will allow a new person to jump in and see clearly what has been done thus far, and in what order, any community partners, info about the CHAs, promotional pieces,

application forms, reports, studies, etc. I hope this will help the new coordinator feel at ease with where the project has been and what the future vision is.

- ☞ Sarah and I have been working at keeping in regular contact with the CHAs to ensure they are doing alright and to keep them up to speed on any announcements.
- ☞ Promotional posters have been flying out of here like hotcakes! THANKS to all who have taken a stack of posters/brochures for your community. Special thanks to Anna-Lisa who has been dragging CHA info with her to every community she visits about getting volunteers.

### Before I Leave I will ....

- ☞ Meet with the CHAs *in their communities* to update their advocacy plan.
- ☞ Making some addition/changes/suggestions to the workbook
- ☞ Type out clearly the training plan that was followed in November for the information of the new trainer.
- ☞ Sarah and I will distribute information about other ADVOCACY groups for the CHAs and info centre. Sarah is working on enhancing the chapter on the HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, which will be finished and distributed by the end of March.
- ☞ Organize an evening of training for VWHC volunteers on what is in the CHA MANUAL piggy-backed with a social for the VWHC volunteers/staff, CHAs and the Community partners. This will happen in April (date TBA) and hope that lots of you can make it. *We are looking at a starting time of 6:30 - 7:30 for the manual review, and 7:30 - ? for the social. Any assistance would be appreciated in organizing this event. Perhaps we can make this another 'volunteer appreciation event' and go all out!*
- ☞ Assist on the hiring committee for the new coordinator.
- ☞ Do more promotion with perhaps an ad in Kinesis.
- ☞ Attend the budget meetings
- ☞ Clean up my office (sorry Anna-Lisa)