



Communitas
SUPPORTIVE CARE SOCIETY

COMMUNITAS 2019/20 Overview

Resiliency Through Adversity



Resiliency Through Adversity

Our Greatest Resource

One of the significant challenges Communitas experienced early on in the pandemic was maintaining our quality of care while addressing the necessary changes to staffing brought on by COVID. Where once staff were free to work at more than one of the services Communitas offers, or even for a sister agency, now those providing essential care had to work in one place only.

Difficult choices had to be made and our Human Resources team worked flat out to fill the vacancies created by this challenge. Jeff Hirsch, our chief human resource officer, is proud of the way his team rose to this challenge.

"We proved to ourselves that we could respond to adversity with both determination and grace," he says. "We were able to adapt quickly and our efforts paid off."

It took a few weeks of long days, scores of applicants, and dozens of interviews but throughout all of that, there was no interruption in residential service and modified services for others we serve. Jeff is also grateful to all the frontline staff who ensured consistent care and who welcomed new staff with warmth and enthusiasm.

"It showed us again that one of our greatest resources is our human resource," he reflects. "We are so grateful for the dedicated, skilled staff who provide such excellent care for the people we serve."



2 out of 3
PERSONS
SERVED USE
DAY SERVICES



Re-silience – (rə'zilyəns/) - noun - The capacity of a system, enterprise, or person to maintain its core purpose and integrity in the face of dramatically changed circumstances.

88% OF PERSONS SERVED
said they feel more
CONFIDENT
to ask for what
THEY WANT



Dear friends,

As we began planning for our annual Outcomes Report, we repeatedly returned to the concept of "resiliency." It is a word that has taken on new meaning in 2020 and you, the reader, have likely used it many times over these last months of the pandemic.

We did not want this report to be simply a "COVID story" as there are so many beautiful ongoing Communitas stories that are unrelated to COVID. Yet, we recognized that there are an equal number of emerging stories and outcomes that speak directly to our work *throughout* the pandemic.

As you read our stories and reflect on the data, we hope you are drawn to the image of *resiliency in the midst of adversity*! Yes, we have had to change things up in rapid order, sometimes even making decisions that are then re-made the next day. And, yes, our days have been uncertain and unusual, yet staff members have persevered and people have been supported.

We also hope that you see a second theme of *resiliency in the midst of diversity*. Innovation and adaptation have been hallmark characteristics of this past year as we continue our commitment to person-centred support and to creating places of belonging, growth and contribution for all.

Both staff and the people who receive our services have brought their gifts and strengths to the challenges we all face and, together, we have discovered what it means to meet these unique days in a spirit of resiliency.

We wish you well.
Stay safe. Stay healthy.

Karyn Santiago
Chief Executive Officer



OFFERING
SERVICE
to people of
All Abilities

INDIVIDUALS
RECEIVING
SUPPORT **828**

98%
Staff feel
that their team
works well or
**VERY WELL
TOGETHER**



Staff feel
that they are
appreciated
AND VALUED

96%



196 unique
TRAINING
EVENTS



453 Staff Members



6.0 yrs. average
employee
TENURE



PERSONS
SERVED SAID
"I feel like I
am part of the family."



97% of persons served
said participating
in Communitas programs
has made their life better



Day Services

Building relationships in the context of community



“Zoombaya” Creates Virtual Connection

When the COVID19 pandemic brought an abrupt end to face-to-face gatherings, our staff had to find new ways to support the people we serve.

To meet this challenge, they created “Zoombaya”: an interactive way to connect with people using Zoom. This unique service supports a diverse group of people from across the Communitas spectrum: developmental disabilities, mental health challenges, and acquired brain injury. Vicky Manderson, a mental health manager, says the collaboration across services has been wonderful.

“Every team member has brought something to the table, whether they're on screen or working diligently in the background,” she says, adding that it is encouraging to see participants from all services interact with each other.

Darlene, a Supported Independent Living participant, says Zoombaya has been a lifeline. “Having this every day stimulates and encourages me.”

Elizabeth, a Community Living Program participant, agrees. “Zoombaya has eased my anxiety and helped me stay connected to Communitas staff and friends.”

Daily classes include mindfulness, exercise, creative projects, fun and games, cooking classes, and more. All the classes incorporate skill development, support self-care, and create social interaction. On weekends, pre-recorded materials keep individuals connected.

For Kortnnaye, a Brain Injury Drop-In participant, the exercise classes are a favourite but she also loves the motivational talks. “Zoombaya keeps me positive and I'm grateful that I can do this from home.”



This has been an awesome opportunity for three very different programs to come together and work alongside each other and bring this to life.

Vicky Manderson, Supported Independent Living manager



Contest Maintains Motivation

When a pandemic interrupts your job search, it's safe to say that you're living in extraordinary times. Staying motivated when you are isolated can be a challenge so Communitas employment specialists, Paul McCracken, Stacey Murdoch, and Tamara Seebaran decided to motivate the people they serve in a unique way: they held a contest.

“The contest was designed to help people set daily goals and stay accountable,” Tamara says.

Participants received a list of tasks, each assigned a number of points. Some of the tasks were focused on personal growth, others on ways to stay connected, and some focused on job search skills. The group met weekly over Zoom to share their experiences and had opportunities to connect individually with their employment specialist.

Stacey says the contest highlighted how important it is to be socially connected during a difficult time. Participants also showed amazing resilience as they stepped out of their comfort zone to learn new skills.

“It was great to see how many individuals were able to access Zoom with little or no help,” Paul says. “They were really motivated by the contest and by the need to stay connected.”

The winner, Kaitlyne, says the contest had a big impact on her life. She tried a variety of tasks and discovered that she enjoyed the independence she gained by learning to cook.



The contest really challenged me to better myself.

Kaitlyne, contest participant



Home Share

Welcoming
individuals
into your life



Hearts Full of Sharing

For 15 years, Corrine has lived with the Neudorf family, her Home Share Providers. For Tina, being a Home Share provider is a calling.

"I love everything about it," she says. "It is hands-on caring and that's what I love to do."

Tina is also a life-long crafter and has passed on these skills to Corrine. An extensive collection of craft supplies allows Tina and Corrine to do all kinds of things: beading, knitting, scrap-booking, rock painting, and more. This creative passion has made the COVID-19 pandemic a positive experience.

"Honestly, this has been a blessing for us," Tina says. "With nowhere to go, we craft whenever we want to. We garden too. We are never bored."

But Tina and Corrine have not simply closed themselves off from the world. Their crafting is a way for them to connect with others. Together, they created craft kits and gifted them to neighbourhood parents looking for creative things to do with their children.

"Corrine loves to give. She is always thinking of others first," Tina says. "I think we learn more from her than she ever learns from us."

With a room filled with craft supplies, an abundance of creativity, and hearts filled with a desire to love and serve, it seems that Tina and Corrine aren't surviving the pandemic, they are thriving through it!



Corrine doesn't see differences or flaws in other people. She simply accepts people for who they are.

Tina, Corrine's Home Share provider



A Party in a Box

Being in community is an important part of living in a Communitas home. Residents participate within the home and in their neighbourhoods. So when the pandemic restricted the ability of our residents to venture outside of their homes, our program directors came up with a creative way to help them connect: a Party in a Box. Tanya Tomsic, who manages a home, was happy to organize the project.

"This was a great way for our residents to keep in touch with their friends," Tanya says.

A number of Communitas homes expressed interest and Tanya divided them into pairs. Participants filled a box with supplies for a party, decorating the outside of their box to represent their home. The parties all took place on the same weekend.

While the boxes varied in size and contents, each one was filled with materials for a true celebration. Tanya was encouraged by how the residents in her home got involved.

"They each contributed something that they love," she says. "We also added a collection of our favourite recipes and other goodies."

Jennifer Richardson manages another participating home. She says the party boxes helped give them a focus outside of themselves.

"Given that residents were isolated to keep them safe and healthy, this activity made everyone feel like we are still part of our wider Communitas family."



Our residents sure loved to unwrap the big, colourful box and enjoyed opening up all the gifts inside.

Angela Poulton, manager

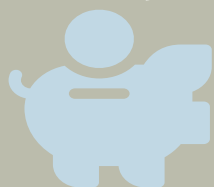
• **4132 Followers**
on Facebook, Instagram,
Twitter, YouTube &
LinkedIn

• **Over 13,400**
unique web visits
from April 2019
to April 2020

• **76 stories told**



\$27,300,000

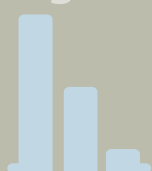


**TOTAL
REVENUE**



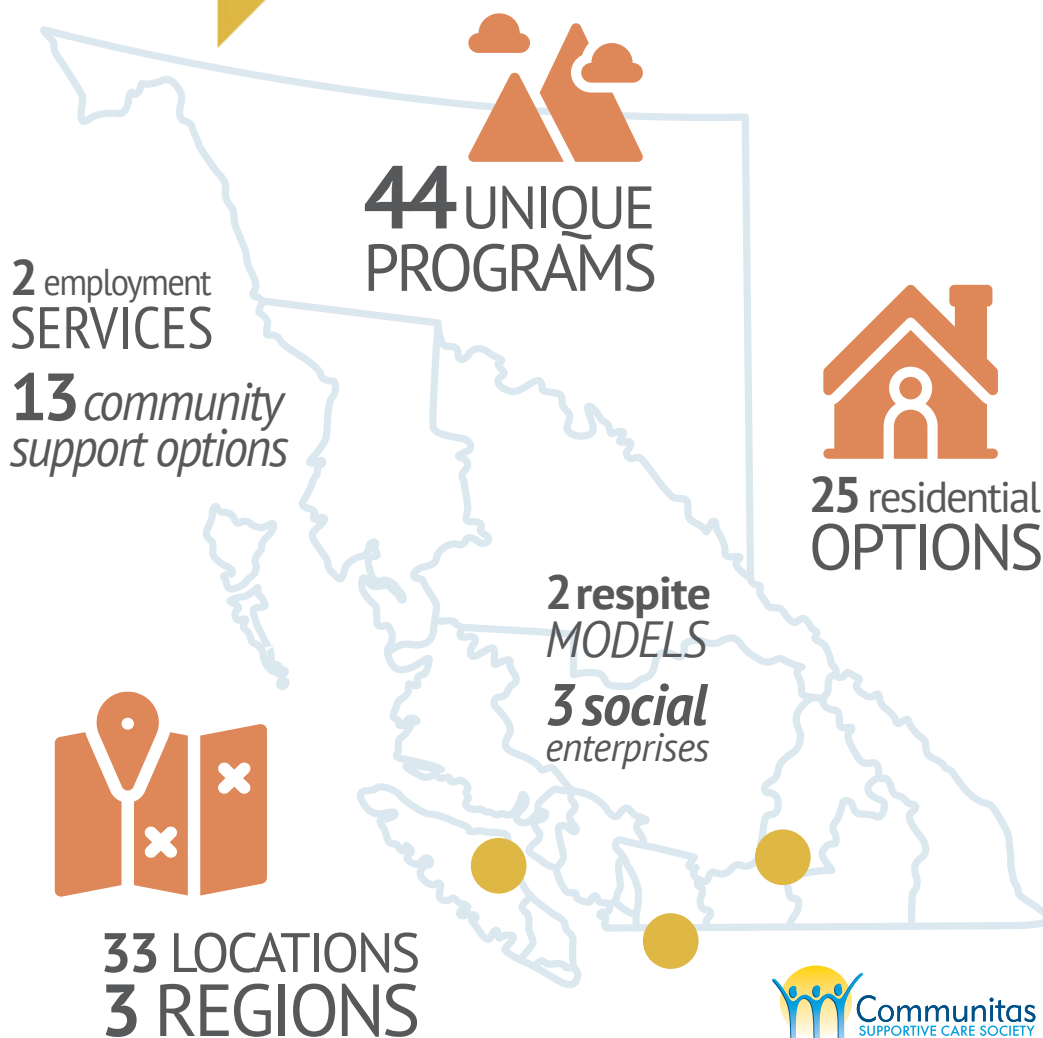
Revenues by Region

76% Lower Mainland
21% Vancouver Island
3% Okanagan Valley



COMMUNITAS *at a Glance*

learn more at communitascare.com



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