



# E-Connector

*Newsletter for the BC Association of Community Response Networks (BC CRN).*

## **BC CRN Expands *It's Not Right!* to More than Bystanders**

*Recent presentation to nursing students at Douglas College receives excellent reception and reviews.*



***It's Not Right!*** (INR) is one of two hallmark programs<sup>1</sup> BC CRN offers to communities as a way to engage with and educate bystanders on the signs of adult abuse, neglect, and self-neglect, and what they can do about it.

To date, trained presenters across the province have been conducting workshops and talks for the general public. Due to the positive feedback received from participants over the course of the last few years, the provincial organization was ready to expand the program beyond bystanders.

Most recently, INR was presented to first year nursing students at Douglas College thanks to the Tri-Cities community response network (CRN). The two-hour presentation took place in early October at the David Lam Campus in Coquitlam, BC.

Karen Bunner, a retired nurse<sup>2</sup> herself, and long time INR trainer and regional mentor for Fraser Valley East presented to this class: "This is the first time I've presented to a specialized group like this. We spent a lot of time on culture and personal biases, which is an area I normally don't spend as much

<sup>1</sup> Gatekeeper is the other program. [View more information on this great program.](#)

<sup>2</sup> Karen has both a Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing Degree (BScN), and Master of Nursing Degree (MN).

time on with other groups. It makes sense: this group was multicultural in nature and keen to learn more about how to spot adult abuse and neglect in their up and coming careers as registered nurses. Learning how our own culture informs our personal biases is important in understanding one another.”

There was a total of 32 students who received this presentation. Karen was asked back by the instructor to be involved in their winter curriculum. As an added benefit to the community, a few students also signed up to get involved in the local CRN, and expressed interest in becoming community presenters themselves.

### ***Tips for Community Groups Interested in Receiving INR or Gatekeeper Presentations***

- Become familiar with BC CRN’s programs, and pick the right one for you. There are a few different ways to get this information:
  - View our website.
  - Download our [informational brochure](#).
  - Contact us at [info@bccrns.ca](mailto:info@bccrns.ca).
- Tentatively set aside a date, time, and location. Contact us at [info@bccrns.ca](mailto:info@bccrns.ca) to discuss some of your options, and we’ll help you get ready.
- Remember, BC CRN offers these programs free of charge to the community thanks to funding from the Province of BC. Your workshop or presentation can also be as long or as short as you need!

### ***Tips for Regional Mentors and CRNs to Promote INR and Gatekeeper to Community Groups***

- Think about who else in the community might benefit from learning more about adult abuse, neglect, and self-neglect. Some example of groups you might approach could include financial institutions, such as banks and credit unions, educational institutions, church and faith groups, phone and cable companies, delivery companies, maintenance companies, and professional associations.
- Take advantage of any networking events you might be attending. You never know who you might meet. Karen’s presentation to the nursing students actually came about from an event she attended in Port Coquitlam.
- If your background is in social work, for example, see if you can present to other social workers or students who are learning to become social workers. This builds instant credibility with the group you are working with.
- After your presentation, follow up and stay in touch with local contacts. They may have another opportunity in the works, or know of someone else who could benefit from receiving either programs.
- Encourage your workshop or presentation participants to either take training to become a community presenter, or volunteer for their area’s community response network (CRN), or both!

## BC CRN Participates in Wellness Fairs in Sea-to-Sky Corridor

October was a busy month for BC CRN in the Sea-to-Sky corridor, thanks to a team effort involving CRN staff and our newest addition to the Regional Mentor Team.

**Fiona Lewis**, Regional Mentor – North Shore, Sea-to-Sky, and Bella Coola, joined BC CRN last month, and since her orientation, she has helped spread the word on adult abuse, neglect, and self-neglect prevention at wellness fairs held in Whistler and Squamish.

BC CRN and local community response networks (CRNs) have organized, participated, and sponsored several seniors' wellness fairs before. This is not new. What was creative in terms of approach was how communities partnered with local health organizations to offer flu shot clinics as part of the fair.

"The turnout to these events was very good," says **Fiona**. "The fair in Squamish saw a large number of seniors. While people received their flu shots, they also were there to take in the displays on various health and wellness topics, including ours on adult abuse and neglect."

In addition to circulating educational materials, BC CRN's participation in the fairs yielded connections that will jumpstart small projects for the local CRNs.

"The [Squamish Public Library](#) has already signed on to participate in World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) 2019, which takes place in June," she adds. "And, we're in discussions with the [Squamish RCMP](#) to tee up some CRN awareness building talks to their own members for sometime in the New Year.

"I've always had an interest in the topic of adult abuse, neglect, and self neglect. This is an issue that needs more attention. I've personally witnessed financial abuse of someone very close to me, and we had to engage with the North Shore CRN for help. I know CRNs can really make a difference to people."

Fiona is a registered social worker who does consulting work with non-profits and small businesses, and is also currently the BC/Alberta Patient Support Liaison for the Aplastic Anemia and Myelodysplasia Association of Canada (AAMAC).

She worked for over 20 years with the Canadian Red Cross where she managed the Health Equipment Loan Program in both BC and Alberta, was instrumental in establishing a Quality Assurance Program, and developed numerous training curricula for program technicians and volunteers. She can be reached at [fiona.lewis@bccrns.ca](mailto:fiona.lewis@bccrns.ca).



*Fiona Lewis (Photo: F. Lewis)*

## Volunteer of the Month: Catherine Dzamastagic, Chilliwack CRN

*Catherine is a registered psychiatric nurse who works with people over 65 years of age with memory impairment and mental illness. She is also a loving mom and wife to an active family that includes her toddler son, an energetic border collie, and second child on the way. For the past three years, she has also acted as the community response network (CRN) coordinator of the Chilliwack CRN on top of her nursing duties, and has made considerable strides in bringing seniors together in the community.*

*BC CRN is very pleased to be profiling Catherine as this edition's volunteer of the month.*

### **Tell us something about yourself.**

I currently work on a team that specializes in the health and mental health of older adults living in the Fraser Health catchment areas. I've been a psychiatric nurse for 10 years. Prior to this role, I've worked in hospitals and ERs as a psychiatric liaison nurse. My job was to act as the first point of contact for patients entering emergency, and guide them through the process to receiving care.

### **How did you come to be involved with the Chilliwack CRN?**

My successor, Denise Armstrong was the coordinator of the Chilliwack CRN. In 2016, she was preparing for maternity leave while I was returning from one. She needed to pass the torch, in a sense, and I gladly accepted it.

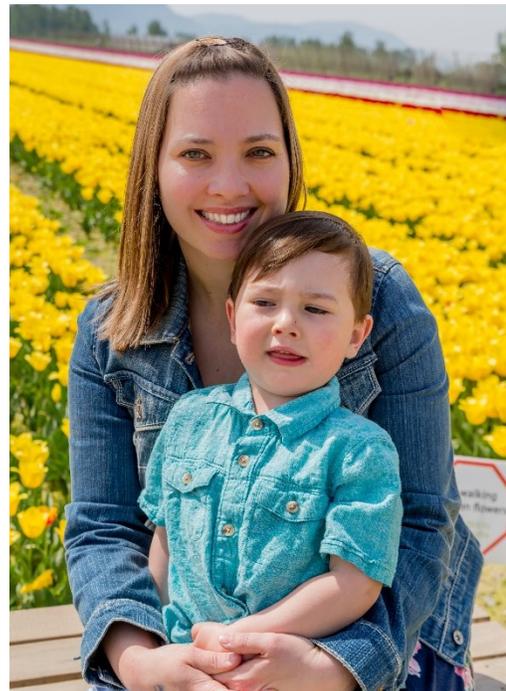
Work also allows me a certain amount of time to do outside projects in addition to my current duties. Everyone I work with has some outside projects they do, and mine happens to be that of the CRN coordinator.

It makes sense for me to be involved with the CRN and I work everyday with people at risk over the age of 65. It's my bread and butter. The role of CRN coordinator and my responsibilities as a nurse complement each other very well.

### **What have been some your favourite CRN project so far?**

Every year we hold a local event for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) where we create a pop-up storefront to attract locals. WEAAD events will always be something we do, and it is a lot of fun to raise awareness on a local level in this way.

We've created Life Boxes and got them into the hands of people all over Chilliwack. (Life Boxes contains a series of forms where an individual can document their emergency



(Photo: C. Dzamastagic)



Life Box contents.

contact information, health information, internet passwords, etc. These boxes are then placed in an easy to find location where a loved one access the information in case of an emergency.)

Right now, we're focused on promoting participation in our Connect Cafés .

### **What is Connect Café?**

This is a new program we started in July 2018 with Connie Stams of the [Compassionate Neighbourhood Health Partners \(CNHP\) Society](#)<sup>3</sup>. Connie also participates in the Chilliwack CRN as a volunteer. We organize a space and time where seniors can meet for a couple hours a week to meet new people, reach out for help, and create new friendships. We'll be offering free coffee and special events at these cafes. The Connect Café concept is quite common in the UK.

So far, we're committed to holding these cafés in different locations in Chilliwack and Sardis on the first and second Thursdays of the month. Eventually, we would like to hold them once a week,

### **It sounds like these cafés are pretty important to the CRN.**

Chilliwack is a place where many retire due to the cheaper cost of living. The city is also much smaller than its neighbouring urban centres. There is no place to send high functioning older adults, and with seniors making up a large percentage of the local population, this means there is a higher risk for self-imposed isolation.

Seniors in Chilliwack need to come together, and we're in a position to offering something fun as a way to address isolation before it becomes a bigger problem.

Our next café is coming soon (in December) and we'll be offering a free meal to everyone to celebrate the holidays.

*If you would like more information about the Chilliwack CRN's Connect Cafés, contact Catherine directly at [Catherine.Dzamastagic@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:Catherine.Dzamastagic@fraserhealth.ca).*

*If you know an extraordinary volunteer you'd like for us to profile in, please contact us at [info@bccrns.ca](mailto:info@bccrns.ca).*

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## **Provincial Learning Events on Holiday Hiatus**

Provincial Learning Events are on winter break for December.

These toll-free teleconferences resume in January 2019.

Provincial Learning Events take place the third Tuesday of the month from 10:30 am to 12 pm. Everyone is welcome.

Email [info@bccrns.ca](mailto:info@bccrns.ca) to receive notifications of upcoming teleconferences.

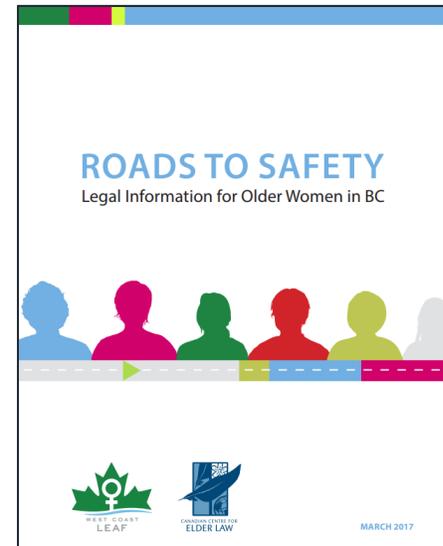
[Access materials from previous events.](#)

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<sup>3</sup> CNHP comprises of volunteer healthcare professionals and other trained volunteers who provide a variety of support services for neighbourhoods and for clients and their families when living with a serious illness or with frailty free of charge.

## Our Top 5: Resources of the Month

1. [Mosaic Seniors Club](#): This Seniors' Club provides a variety of free activities to encourage participants to make new friends, learn new skills and join community events. Aimed at immigrants and refugees aged 55 years and up to help improve physical, social, spiritual, emotional, and mental well-being.
2. [Social isolation of seniors: A Focus on New Immigrant and Refugee Seniors in Canada](#) (2018): This supplement is a resource to help organizations and service providers adopt approaches to help new immigrant and refugee seniors strengthen human connections. Produced by Employment and Social Development Canada.
3. [Canadian Frailty Network \(CFN\)](#): CFN is Canada's sole network devoted to improving care for older Canadians living with frailty and supporting their families and caregivers. Their website also has a Learning Centre containing education videos and resources.
4. [Roads to Safety: Legal Information for Older Women in BC](#) (2017): A handbook covers legal issues older women may face when they have experienced violence. It explains rights and options, using stories to illustrate the legal information. Produced by West Coast Leaf in partnership with the [Canadian Centre for Elder Law](#).
5. [General Information about Legal Issues and Court Matters in British Columbia](#) (2016): This toolkit provides front line workers legal information and resources tailored to meet the needs of the anti-violence sector. Produced by the BC Society of Transition Houses.



*“Like” [Facebook](#) or “follow” us on [Twitter](#) to receive the latest resources on adult abuse and neglect.*

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## Our Top 3: Headlines of the Month

1. [Caregivers vital to health-care system but often untrained and unsupported: report](#), CTV News, November 15, 2018.
2. [Suspicious people at the door prompts warning](#), Delta Police, November 6, 2018.
3. [What Millennials really want to know about caregiving for their parents](#), Forbes, November 2, 2018.

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## Campaigns & Professional Development Events

- **Reducing Elder Abuse in BC: Together in Action Conference, Council to Reduce Elder Abuse (CREA) *POSTPONED TO 2019***

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the 2018 CREA conference originally slated for November 29-30 of 2018 has been rescheduled to yet to be determined dates in 2019.

Apologies for the inconvenience this change may have caused.

- **Have Your Say on How Poverty is Measured (Survey), Statistics Canada Agency**  
*Open now until January 31, 2019*

The agency has created a short questionnaire on current estimates of how much money a family needs for items like food, clothing, shelter and transportation. The questionnaire takes no more than five minutes to complete. Participation is anonymous and respondent information is protected by the Privacy Act.

[View more information or to complete the questionnaire.](#)

*E Connector* is published 11 times a year (monthly except for a combined July/Aug. issue).

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