Healthy Aging
by United Way At home. In community.

BETTER AT HOME
Aboriginal Programs Evaluation 2017/18

Prepared by Team Play Consulting Inc. and SHIFT Collaborative

TEAMPLAY CONSULTING

SHIFT shift to a better world

Better at Home
United Way helping seniors remain independent.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to honour the many participants in this evaluation, including the Coordinators of the Aboriginal Better at Home Programs across the province. The Aboriginal Better at Home Programs that participated in this evaluation were the Cowichan, Gitxsan, Sto:lo, and Tsleil-Waututh (and Squamish) programs.

We are at an important juncture in Canadian history with the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was an important outcome of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Over a period of six years the Truth and Reconciliation Commission provided people affected by the residential school system with the opportunity to be heard and share their stories. In 2015 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its final report, which contained 94 calls to action to further reconciliation between Canadians and Indigenous peoples.[1] Please see Appendix 1 for the United Way of the Lower Mainland's Truth and Reconciliation Statement.

Collective efforts from organizations and all people are required to shift, recognize and move forward on a new and refreshed relationship between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian society. Moving towards reconciliation requires courage, cultural humility and a desire to never repeat the wrongs of the past. This evaluation and report intend to walk one more step towards the goal of reconciliation as this will make for stronger programs within Better at Home and move us closer to the kind of Canadians we intend to be.

We also wish to recognize the videographer, Hannah Clifford of Hannah C Productions and Mary Clifford, the previous evaluator who completed the important groundwork for this evaluation. We would like to thank United Way of the Lower Mainland for their support and guidance during this evaluation, in particular Kahir Lalji, Jody Olsson, Nichole Holdback and Bobbi Symes. Thank you also to the Better at Home Aboriginal Reference Group for their important feedback (see the table below for a list of members).

Table 1. Better at Home Aboriginal Reference Group

Anne Cochran	Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council/Fraser Thompson Indian Services Society
Deborah Hollins	Executive Director, Nanaimo Family Life Association
Dan Elliott	Seniors Outreach Worker, Nanaimo Family Life Association
Erin Anderlini	Director of Health, Prince George Native Friendship Centre
Judy Sturm, R.N., B.S.N.	Aboriginal Lead, Interior Health
Steve Sxwithul'txw	Senior Advisory, Ministry of Health
Jody Olsson	Regional Planner, United Way of the Lower Mainland
Kahir Lalji	Provincial Director, United Way of the Lower Mainland

[1] For more information and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada please visit the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation: https://nctr.ca/map.php

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

United Way of the Lower Mainland has adopted a progressive and innovative stance by becoming the first provincial funding initiative to provide non-medical supports to Elders in four distinct First Nations across British Columbia. The Better at Home program provides non-medical supports to Elders through a basket of services that include: grocery shopping, transportation, housekeeping, home repair, friendly visiting, snow shoveling, and yard work.

These services are intended to keep Elders socially connected and living a fulsome life in their home community. The four Better at Home programs evaluated include Cowichan, Sto:lo, Gitxsan and Tsleil-Waututh (with supplementary data from Squamish program).

This evaluation has uncovered important distinctions of the Aboriginal Better at Home program that are essential to address in our collective efforts to move towards reconciliation. Many First Nations in our prosperous province and country continue to experience deep poverty, economic inequities and lack of home ownership. Yet, there is a deep sense of pride and resilience that defines these First Nations and their communities. The cultural underpinning of relationships is foundational in First Nations teachings. Elders are often described as the 'heart' of First Nations as they play the important role of keepers of wisdom, knowledge, and history. Elders hold crucial roles in supporting and imparting tradition, knowledge, culture, values, and lessons using storytelling and role modeling practices. There is much for mainstream culture to learn about from the respect given to elders and First Nations' traditions, cultures and beliefs.

Aging in Place

The majority of people would like to remain in their homes and communities as long as possible to 'age in place.' Aging in place refers to having the health, social support, and services needed to live safely and independently in your home or your community for as long as you wish and are able. Aging in place considers housing, community accessibility, services, and transportation, as well as other medical and non-medical supports.

Community-Based Seniors' Services Sector

Many networks and organizations are working together across the continuum of care to support elders to age in place. The community-based seniors' services sector includes all municipal and not-for-profit organizations that provide services and programming for older adults at the local level, including at community centres, single-and multi-service agencies, seniors' centres, community coalitions, and

neighbourhood houses across British Columbia. These partners are moving toward an approach that embraces the social determinants of health and builds on the health and resiliency of elders/seniors and the sector. Moreover, the sector is advocating for a funding and policy framework that strengthens the capacity of the entire community-based seniors' services sector. This includes the need for increased collaboration and coordination between funders and other partners. First Nations, First Nations Governments and the First Nations Health Authority needs to be included in this important planning and movement for the sector as a whole.

First Nations Context

The assumptions behind the mainstream Better at Home program do not necessarily fit the First Nations context and program. This evaluation has uncovered some of the important changes that must be made to adjust Better at Home to more effectively meet the needs of First Nations communities. Some of these significant differences are described in the sidebox. These considerations influence the type of community programming, the monitoring and reporting mechanisms and the theory of change. Economic conditions of these communities mean that the Better at Home program is 100% subsidized and, for the most part, volunteerism is difficult to rely on.

The evaluation identified unique needs in the First Nations communities such as significant travel distances and the need for commercial grade equipment to address yard maintenance. The most important findings revealed the importance of the underlying belief system, values and culture inherent in the First Nations communities. United Way of the Lower Mainland must consider these needs by a) focusing on in-house training and systemic change to more acutely understand the needs of First Nations communities, reconciliation and cultural safety; and b) co-designing and developing a culturally informed theory of change and evaluation framework that more closely mirrors the cultural context of the programming.

Six themes emerged over the course of the evaluation and are explored throughout this report:

1. Culture and connection at the heart of service.
2. Integration of Better at Home and Health Centre services.
3. Human resource challenges.
4. Program structure and resource allocations.

Box 1. First Nations Context

INTERDEPENDENCE IS THE HALLMARK OF THE FIRST NATIONS BETTER AT HOME PROGRAMS NOT INDEPENDENCE.

GEOGRAPHICAL ISOLATION AND LACK OF TRANSPORTATION OFTEN WORSEN SOCIAL ISOLATION.

THE LEGACY OF COLONIALISM AND RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS HAS FRACTURED TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS. HEALING IS NEEDED.

THERE ARE SIGNIFICIANT INEQUITIES THAT INFLUENCE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND WELLBEING.

ON RESERVE HOUSING IS NOT OWNED BY INDIVIDUALS AND RENTAL HOUSING CREATES MAINTENANCE CHALLENGES.

5. Tracking, reporting and evaluation.
6. Collaboration between United Way of the Lower Mainland, First Nation Governments and the First Nations Health Authority.

The other need identified throughout the evaluation was for United Way of the Lower Mainland to embrace and institute practices to bring reconciliation to life. What this means to each First Nations Better at Home community must be explored. The following practices are recommended:

- Zero tolerance for racial bias
- Hiring practices that support diversity
- Indigenous cultural safety training
- Meaningful engagement from governance and leadership to address systemic barriers
- A commitment to engagement and systemic change
- Trauma informed practices

There were significant successes identified in the evaluation and these practices should be continued. Relationships are at the core of the services and are a key focus in the four Aboriginal Better at Home programs. Elders expressed a desire for more connections, especially intergenerational connections and community and cultural events. There is a holistic perspective of elder care, which effectively unites medical and non-medical supports in these communities. This is an important finding that could help advance the medical and non-medical integration needs of Better at Home as a whole.

Aboriginal Better at Home programs have integrated cultural programming and hiring of contractors from the First Nation communities into their program models. A deeply important impact of Better at Home is the role it has played in enhancing economic conditions in the community through needed employment. This should be continued and enhanced to further increase economic opportunities in communities.

Finally, it is essential to frame this evaluation as a learning opportunity, "the ability to think critically about one's assumptions, beliefs and actions is a survival necessity."[2] We learn through practice.

[2] Brookfield, S.D. (2015). The Skillful Teacher: On technique, trust and responsiveness in the classroom (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3
Aging in Place 3
Community-Based Seniors' Services Sector 3
First Nations Context 4
TABLE OF CONTENTS 6
INTRODUCTION TO BETTER AT HOME ABORIGINAL PROGRAMS 8
Better at Home 8
Better at Home Aboriginal Programs 8
Core Principles 8
Better at Home in the First Nations Context 9
EVALUATION FRAMEWORK 10
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY 11
Data Collection Methodologies 11
Better at Home First Nations Gathering - Paddling Together: June 2017 12
Data Limitations 12
PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND SERVICES 12
Program Funding 12
Geography 13
Profile of Elders using the Services 13
SERVICE DELIVERY 15
CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS TO SERVICES 16
Encouraging and Supporting Interdependence, Rather than Independence 17
Integrating Culture Into All Services 17
Unique Needs for Yard Work 18
WHO DELIVERS THE SERVICES? 18
Paid Staff 18
Volunteer Role 19
SERVICE INTEGRATION AND ALIGNMENT 20

POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS 22
SERVICE SATISFACTION AND IMPACTS 22
PROGRAM CHALLENGES 23
Equipment Challenges 23
Risk Management Challenges 24
Other Program Delivery Challenges 24
THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS 25
Better at Home Aboriginal Evaluation Themes 25
1. Culture and Connection at the Heart of Services 26
2. Integration of Better at Home and Health Centre Services is a Strength 27
3. Human Resource Challenges 28
4. Need to Adapt Program Structure and Resources 29
5. Tracking, Reporting and Evaluation 31
6. Relationships with First Nations Governments and FNHA 32
Better at Home Aboriginal Evaluation Recommendations 35
APPENDIX 1. UWLM TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT 37
APPENDIX 2. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK 38

INTRODUCTION TO BETTER AT HOME ABORIGINAL PROGRAMS

Better at Home

Better at Home provides non-medical supports to older adults across the province of British Columbia (BC) so they can stay in their home and remain healthy, active and engaged in their communities. The program provides a basket of services that includes grocery shopping, transportation, housekeeping, home repair, friendly visiting, snow shoveling, and yard work. Better at Home has been managed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland since 2014 and is focused on three primary goals:

- Help older adults live independently in their homes
- Help older adults stay connected in their communities
- Develop a sustainable program model that is community-driven, older adult-centred and integrated into the continuum of care.

Better at Home programs are funded by the Government of British Columbia, managed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland, and implemented by local community-based organizations. Currently there are over 70 Better at Home programs operating across the province.

Better at Home Aboriginal Programs

There are four Aboriginal Better at Home programs delivered across the province by the United Way of the Lower Mainland. This evaluation report is focused on the four programs, delivered in and by First Nations communities:

- Cowichan Tribes
- Gitxsan Nation
- Sto:lo Nation
- Tsleil-Waututh (with supplementary data from the Squamish program)

The Tsleil-Waututh Nation delivers their own Better at Home program, however they were not available for interview and thus some data was derived from the Squamish Better at Home Program. This is the first Aboriginal Better at Home evaluation.

Core Principles

Better at Home has ten core principles that guide delivery and ensure community control and flexibility to adapt the program to meet local needs and integrate with other local services. Strengthening independence and social connectivity are at the heart of the program model in all communities:

1. **Elders planning for and with Elders:** Elders are engaged in the planning and governance of the local programs.
2. **Prevention oriented:** Better at Home programs are built on the assumption that preservation of independence, dignity and health, and the delay of functional decline are worthwhile investments.

3. **Elder centred:** The local programs are designed to respond to the needs, priorities and changing circumstances of Elders in that community.
4. **Community driven:** Within the Better at Home framework, local programs are developed by the community for the community, and involve coordination of services from various organizations and partners.
5. **Evidence informed:** Local programs are built on the learning and evidence developed through previous program models and evaluation; through ongoing monitoring, evaluation and learning; and on the desire to seek continuous improvements through additional learning and research.
6. **Independence focused:** Better at Home fosters self-sufficiency and independence by offering services that assist participants to live independently; promote health literacy and support self-care; promote social inclusion; and enable community connectedness.
7. **Simple and understandable:** Services incorporate clear and accessible information, ease of access, and the least amount of official procedure needed to maintain standards of safety, privacy and quality.
8. **Based on need:** Local programs respond to Elders' needs for service and ability to contribute to the cost of providing those services.
9. **Integrated:** Local programs are developed in partnership with Elders and other key stakeholders and will be integrated where feasible and, by design, complementary to other services and supports.
10. **A non-governmental program:** Better at Home is managed by United Way of the Lower Mainland and identified as a non-profit sector program funded by government, which does not replace existing governmental programs or services.

Better at Home in the First Nations Context

Historic and contemporary impacts of colonization, including poverty, lower levels of education and literacy, as well as impacts of intergenerational trauma, are pervasive (and deeply intertwined) barriers to employment for Indigenous people.

Indigenous people represented approximately 6% of BC's population in 2016. The majority of Indigenous people of BC are First Nations, followed by Métis and Inuit.[3]

The Aboriginal population is younger than the rest of the population in Canada, with an average age of 32 years. However, the population is aging and in 2016, 7% of the population were aged 65 or older. According to population projections, the proportion of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations aged 65 years and older could more than double by 2036.[4]

Historically, financial disparities have existed between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations, and Aboriginal populations experience higher rates of unemployment compared to other population groups

[3] Statistics Canada. (2017). *British Columbia [Province] and Canada [Country]* (table). *Census Profile*. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.
[4] Statistics Canada. (2017). *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: Key results from the 2016 Census*. Retrieved from https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/171025/dq171025a-eng.pdf?st=GW5OPoPq

in Canada. These disparities are particularly significant for First Nations people living on reserve; in 2016, the unemployment rate on reserve was 22.5% while the average income was only $25,944.[5] This impacts retirement incomes later in life, as receipt of certain benefits, such as the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), are based on your employment history and earnings over your work life. Further compounding these challenges is the fact that up until the late 1980s First Nations people, whose earnings were tax exempt, did not have the option of making CPP contributions.[6] First Nation Elders have not had the same opportunities for employment due to the impacts of colonialism, cultural devastation and genocide in Canada.

Housing on reserves is owned by the Federal Government or the local Band Government. Residents as renters have little control over even the simplest of repairs or modifications to support aging in place. In 2016, 19% of Aboriginal people lived in a dwelling requiring major repairs, compared to 6% of the non-Aboriginal population. When specifically considering First Nations people living on reserve, 44% live in dwellings requiring major repairs.[7]

Elders often live in one house all their lives; many homes were built in the 1970s and have never been updated. The majority of the Elders visited and surveyed for this report have lived 30 or more years in the same house, and many have raised their children there and often have extended families living with them due to on-reserve housing shortages. Approximately 38% of First Nations people living on reserve live in a dwelling that is overcrowded and has an inadequate number of bedrooms for the number of occupants.[8]

While in the past health funding for Aboriginal populations was administered by the Federal Government, BC has developed a unique model that is community driven and led by the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA). At this time, non-medical services for Elders do not exist within the mandate of the FNHA, however medical services do. In all four of the Better at Home First Nation communities the program is delivered side by side with the Nations' Health Services, which includes home and community care for Elders. Each Nation develops and delivers their own Health Centres/services with funding from FNHA.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The evaluation framework for this report was developed by the initial evaluator Mary Clifford. The framework identified five key program objectives for Aboriginal Better at Home Programs:

- Offer basket of seven services to Elders residing at home
- Offer services to Indigenous Elders from a cultural basis
- Offer services that meet the needs of Elders and their supports
- Offer cost effective, accessible services across communities
- Understand the different structures, opportunities and realities for Aboriginal Elders and communities

[5] Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016175.
[6] Giymah, White& Maxim. (2013). Income and First Nations Elderly: Policies for a Better Future. Retrieved from http://apr.thompsonbooks.com/vols/APR_Vol_1Ch4.pdf
[7] Statistics Canada. (2017). The housing conditions of Aboriginal people in Canada. Retrieved from https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/98-200-x/2016021/98-200-x2016021-eng.cfm
[8] Statistics Canada. (2017). The housing conditions of Aboriginal people in Canada. Retrieved from https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/98-200-x/2016021/98-200-x2016021-eng.cfm

The evaluation framework outlines the core questions, indicators and data collection methods used to address each of the program objectives (See Appendix 2 for the full evaluation framework).

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Data Collection Methodologies

The methods and tools in this evaluation followed The Four R's – Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility:[9]

- ***Respect*** is demonstrated toward First Nations Peoples' cultures and communities by valuing their diverse knowledge of health matters and health science knowledge that contributes to First Nations communities health and wellness.
- ***Relevance*** to culture and community is critical for the success of First Nations health training and research.
- ***Reciprocity*** is accomplished through a two-way process of learning and research exchange. Both community and researcher benefit from the research relationship.
- ***Responsibility*** is empowerment and fostered through active and rigorous engagement and participation.

The research also employed OCAP (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession) considerations as per the guidelines detailed below. OCAP Community Agreements were negotiated with each Better at Home program. OCAP Principles are:[10]

- ***Ownership:*** Ownership refers to the relationship of First Nations to their cultural knowledge, data, and information. This principle states that a community or group owns information collectively in the same way that an individual owns his or her personal information.
- ***Control*****:** The principle of control affirms that First Nations, their communities and representative bodies are within their rights in seeking to control all aspects of research and information management processes that impact them. First Nations control of research can include all stages of a particular research project – from start to finish. The principle extends to the control of resources and review processes, the planning process, management of the information and so on.
- ***Access*****:** First Nations must have access to information and data about themselves and their communities, regardless of where it is currently held. The principle also refers to the right of First Nations communities and organizations to manage and make decisions regarding access to their collective information. This may be achieved, in practice, through standardized formal protocols.
- ***Possession***: While ownership identifies the relationship between people and their information in principle, possession or stewardship is more concrete. It refers to the physical control of data. Possession is a

[9] Kirkness & Barnhardt. (2001). The 'Four R's- Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility.' Retrieved from https://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/education2/the4rs.pdf

[10] First Nations Information Governance Centre. (2014). *The First Nations Information Governance Centre. Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP™): The Path to First Nations Information Governance*. Ottawa, ON: The First Nations Information Governance Centre.

mechanism by which ownership can be asserted and protected.

The data collection methodologies used in this evaluation included individual interviews,[11] circle (group) sessions, surveys and data/document reviews. Cultural methods such as sharing circles, feasting, opening prayer, gifting, and recognizing the territory and authority of the First Nations were also included.

Stories, quotes and other qualitative data were scribed or recorded to pull information from and demonstrate or support data findings with a personal/client voice or experience.

In addition, to highlight and showcase the good work of Better at Home Aboriginal Programs, in partnership with Sto:lo First Nations a video promoting the program was produced during the engagement and data collection phase. The video can be viewed here.

Better at Home First Nations Gathering - Paddling Together: June 2017

The Paddling Together Gathering was held over two days and co-organized with the Better at Home First Nations Steering Committee as part of the Engagement Strategy. The event included all Program Coordinators, Health Centre staff, and United Way of the Lower Mainland staff members. The purpose of the gathering was to provide an opportunity for sharing and learning about the program services, program challenges, successes, and recommendations to improve services. The recommendations from this gathering have been integrated into this report.

Data Limitations

First Nations oral traditions are strong both in personal and organizational contexts, meaning that written documentation may not always be prioritized. The evaluation process could not always compare information across sites due to gaps in data. In every community, Better at Home is co-located with the local Health Centre and Better at Home Coordinators and Health Centre staff work side by side. This proximity encourages high levels of verbal communication ranging from referrals to problem solving, which is a strength, however, it may also mean that information is not documented consistently. The small size of many of these communities also means that Coordinators and the Health Centre staff have intimate knowledge of Elders' situations and needs, beyond what is formally documented, and in many cases have known the Elders for their entire lives. The ability to capture data is also significantly impacted when a Coordinator leaves the program, which did occur in the Sto:lo site in the year prior to this report.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND SERVICES

Program Funding

Aboriginal Better at Home Program funding is calculated using the provincial formula and is currently $100,000 per community. A portion of program funding is typically allocated for service subsidies. In contrast

[11] Although the second evaluation team was advised interviews were completed, we were unable to access these documents and therefore cannot provide the themes that emerged from these interviews.

with mainstream Better at Home programs, all First Nations programs offer 100% subsidy, meaning they do not have a service fee revenue base.

Geography

All of the Nations working with Better at Home have 2,500 – 6,000 members living within their territories. These Nations typically co-exist beside or amongst larger communities like Duncan, North Vancouver, Chilliwack and Abbotsford and service areas are typically spread over a large geography requiring significant travel.

All of the Aboriginal Better at Home programs serve a large geographic area with multiple smaller villages:

- The Cowichan Tribes Better at Home program serves five villages/communities all within urban boundaries around Duncan/Cowichan Valley.
- The Gitxsan Nation program serves four villages/communities spread out over about 60 km of road with several bridges that can be closed for hours or days in winter conditions.
- The Squamish Nation program serves five villages within the North and West Vancouver areas of the Lower Mainland (the program does not serve the City of Squamish).
- The Sto:lo Territory program serves 7 of the 11 Sto:lo Nations, spread out over hundreds of kilometers along the lower Fraser River from Yale to Langley.

Winter driving conditions can prevent access to these communities or result in significant travel times, especially in the North. All staff, volunteers and contractors need to be able to drive and have a vehicle, which is not always possible in these small communities.

Profile of Elders using the Services

In March 2017, program reports indicated 322 active program participants across the four programs and by March 2018 this increased to 408 participants (see Table 2). The changes in participant numbers are dramatic in some cases, representing both increases and decreases (e.g., an increase of 57 to 179 in Cowichan and a slight decrease from 107 to 98 in Sto:lo). In Cowichan, the program shifted its approach and the increase was due to more outreach to rural villages. The data reports indicated a slight decline in the number of Elders served in Sto:lo, this was in part due to a vacant Coordinator position and transition time required for the new Coordinator to be trained.

Table 2. Active Better at Home Participants

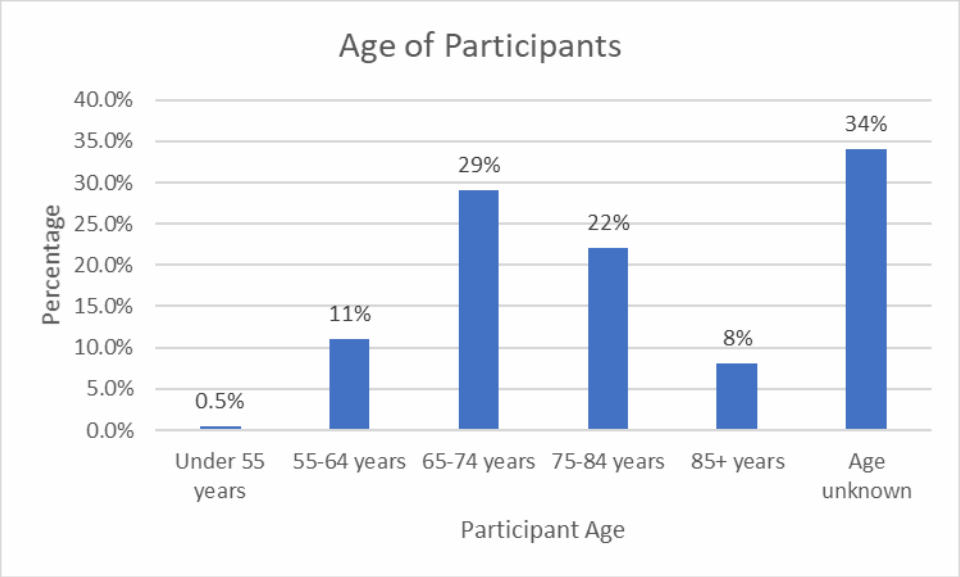
Active Better at Home Participant Counts	2017	2018
Squamish Nation	104	100
CowichanTribes	57	179
Gitxsan Nation	54	31

Sto:loTerritory	107	98
	322	**408**

The data indicates that the Elder population being served by the Aboriginal Better at Home programs is young compared to the population being served by other Better at Home programs in BC – about a third less participants in the Aboriginal programs are aged 75 years and up (see Figure 1 and Table 3). This is reflective of the overall trend in Canada that Aboriginal populations are younger than non-Aboriginal populations. In 2018, the number of participants aged 75 and up, in the Aboriginal programs, decreased even further and the number of participants reported as 'age unknown' increased. Staff report that the high number of participants in the age unknown category is due to several cultural factors:

- There are sensitivities around younger persons asking an Elder's age, as it is considered impolite.
- Elders may not know their age due to loss of records or they were given a random 'birthday' as a child in residential schools.

Figure 1. Average Age of Aboriginal Program Better at Home Participants



Based on the program report data and anecdotal reporting, three-quarters of Elders participating in Aboriginal Better at Home programs live with family or others in the community, which is a much higher proportion than other Better at Home programs (see table 3 below). Although housing is sometimes shared, it does not necessarily mean the Elder receives sufficient support. Elders in the Aboriginal Better at Home programs receive full subsidy due to the economic conditions on reserve; low income levels and the lack of home ownership mean Elders have no equity and limited disposable income.

Table 3. Better at Home Comparative Demographics

Participant Demographics	First Nations Better at Home Programs[12]	Average in Other Better at Home Programs[13]
Participants living with family/others	73%	31%
Average age of participants	12% are 64 and under 29% are 65-74 30% are 75+	11% are 64 and under 26% are 65-74 63% are 75+
Gender	59% female 41% male	71% female 28% male
Subsidy Levels	100% full subsidy	18% no subsidy 32% full subsidy

SERVICE DELIVERY

Currently, all First Nation Better at Home programs have the option to offer seven main services to Elders. These include:

- Light housekeeping
- Transportation
- Friendly visiting
- Light yard work
- Minor home repairs
- Grocery shopping
- Snow shoveling

Aboriginal Better at Home programs also may offer other non-medical services as determined by community need (e.g., wood chopping).

Program service delivery data from 2016/17 is described in Table 4 below. There is little demand reported for home repairs (however gutter cleaning has been offered previously) in the First Nations programs, likely due to the lack of private ownership of homes. This does not mean that there is not a need for home repairs though, which became apparent through the interview process. It would be helpful to identify unique ways to capture information and trends on service needs that are not reflected in program service delivery reports. There is also far less demand for transportation and grocery shopping than among the other Better at Home programs in the province.

With the exception of the Gitxsan program, the most popular service across all Aboriginal programs is yard work, which also represents the only service with waitlists. Friendly visiting and housekeeping services are the other most requested services.

The Gitxsan program demand for friendly visiting (72%) surpasses yard work, while the Cowichan Tribes program reported little demand (2%) for friendly visiting. Interviews with program staff indicate that in the

[12] UWLM, Better at Home Program Reports for 2016/17 Year
[13] UWLM, Better at Home Provincial Update presentation February 2017

Cowichan area the program takes advantage of other Nation delivered and community operated social programs for Elders/community members, and friendly visits are often integrated into other programming through the Better at Home program. In contrast, in Gitxsan which is smaller and rural, there are no other social services and Better at Home has stepped in to fill this void for Elders in a more significant way.

Table 4. Program Reports: Services Delivered

2016-2018 Program Reports on Services Delivered				
Services Provided	**Cowichan Tribes**	**Gitxsan Nation**	**Squamish Nation - Tsleil-Waututh**	**Sto:lo Territory**
Yard work (includes wood cutting)	59%	13%	59%	70%
Friendly visiting	3%	35%	3%	9%
Housekeeping	25%	3%	31%	14%
Snow shoveling	3%	3%	0%	3%
Transportation	2%	26%	5%	3%
Grocery shopping	8%	19%	1%	0.4%
Home repairs	0.1%	0.2%	0%	0.4%

This ability to tailor services to the needs of each community is important. Programs gather community wide data, where all programs and services in the community contribute to the data picture, and the community then develops a shared understanding of, and approach to filling the gaps. This data may not be fully reflected in Better at Home reporting and documentation.

Program staff report demand for additional services such as wellness activities (linked to fall prevention for example) as well as gutter cleaning and window cleaning. Most Elders requested more community activities.

CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS TO SERVICES

Program adaptations have been implemented in three specific areas of service delivery. These areas describe the unique cultural context of the programs: encouraging and supporting interdependence (rather than independence); integrating culture into all services; and unique needs for yard work.

Encouraging and Supporting Interdependence, Rather than Independence

A consistent adaptation in all programs and evaluation interviews is intergenerational connections and community engagement as a norm. The goal for First Nations programs is to encourage and support interdependence, rather than independence. Respondents cautioned United Way of the Lower Mainland that the language of the Better at Home program needs to be adapted to reflect this strong foundation of connectivity. For example, the idea of helping Elders become or remain independent is a different concept and outcome than what is sought by First Nations communities who speak of helping to restore and honour traditional ways of living intergenerationally and with a high degree of interdependence.

> ***"Our goal is not one of 'independence for the Elder' but of 'interdependence of all community members' for wellness and a peaceful nation."***
>
> Paddling Together Participants

This is a significant mindset shift that impacts the nature of service delivery. In the Aboriginal Better at Home programs, the connection between the Elder and the service provider is always one of 'visiting.' The visit, or the relationship, is central and the services provided flow out of that relationship development and are holistic in nature (meaning not separated in distinct parts from the whole person). This creates reporting challenges for the programs. This seemed to come up throughout the course of the evaluation as well – social connections are at the centre of what we do. For example, the reporting requirements ask for distinct recording of visits, but the expectation of programs to report a friendly visit for every service is not suited to the way services are delivered. Programs also indicated that communities may not have meeting spaces or Elders Centres so supporting connections often requires long drives to other communities.

Integrating Culture Into All Services

Programs are very intentionally integrating culture into all services. This includes hiring members of the community who speak the language and/or understand traditional practices, as well as ensuring that Elders are able to attend feasts and community events. Elders indicate they want to go berry picking and participate in other traditional activities as well. Cultural activities were the most requested additional service by Elders interviewed.

The Tsleil-Waututh program finds having Coast Salish volunteers, and/or contractors allows for greater understanding of the Elders by the workers. It also helps the family members to feel safe. Coast Salish cultural traditions are honoured and practiced within all aspects of programming.

The Sto:lo Better at Home Coordinator offered her reflection on how they have used and incorporated their distinct

nationhood and culture into the Better at Home program they deliver: *"First Nation teachings revolve around family and the Sto:lo program strives to include family and we communicate as well as include family as much as possible."*

The Sto:lo Better at Home program has been involved in helping with cultural gatherings and also helps at the longhouse where one of the Elders resides. In the future the Sto:lo Better at Home program is considering throwing their own gathering or surveying what the Elders might be interested in learning or attending. Gitxsan, Cowichan and Sto:lo programs engage in a lot of food harvesting activities with Elders (e.g., fish camps).

Unique Needs for Yard Work

Yard work creates very unique needs in the First Nations Better at Home programs. The context is notably different from other Better at Home programs, as noted by a program Coordinator: *"Yards can be the size of a football field, or half an acre, and they are usually not cultivated, but left wild."*

This means that yard work requires much more time and typically a crew of people, as well as commercial grade equipment, and the nature of the work is often riskier. For example, workers may need to deal with windfalls, burn piles, etc., in order to prevent dangers such as infestations and fires. The scale and type of work demands contractors be engaged.

WHO DELIVERS THE SERVICES?

Paid Staff

Each program has at least one paid staff person, the Better at Home Coordinator, and this person is likely to provide some of the services as well as manage the program. Other staff and contractors are hired from among the members of the First Nation, contributing much needed job experience, training and employment, while also ensuring that services are delivered in ways that enhance the cultural norms of the community. The four services outlined in table 5 below are primarily provided by paid staff or contractors. This is unique compared to the other Better at Home programs which primarily rely on volunteers. The importance of economic livelihoods in First Nations communities contributes to the tendency to hire other staff and contractors more frequently.

Table 5. Services Provided by Paid Workers

Who Provides the Services?	
Yard work	93% contractors or staff
Friendly visiting	96% staff
Housekeeping	99% contractors or staff
Snow shoveling	99% contractors or staff

The Better at Home Coordinator role is complex and the tasks include:

- Understanding local and cultural knowledge
- Assessment of Elders' needs
- Administrative duties
- Assessment of yard work and risk management
- Management of labour crews
- Maintaining good relationships with First Nations Health Centre staff and other community groups

> ***"I can't say enough about the family and cultural connections created between the parent and child program and the Elders we match within the BH Program."***
>
> Better at Home Coordinator at Paddling Together

Nations have found it works best when they are able to hire and train a Better at Home Coordinator over several years. The Gitxsan Program Coordinator (Champion) is a member of the Health Team who brings both clinical and community development capacity to the role. In other communities, collaboration is embedded into the role along with the diverse skill sets required. One Coordinator described how important it was to create a team that provides service to a community, rather than a one-on-one model. The Squamish Nation has provided external coaching/training supports to the Better at Home staff specifically to facilitate transitions when a new Coordinator has been hired.

There were several suggestions focused on how to build staff capacity. This included development of a distinct Community of Practice (CoP) for the First Nations Program Coordinators (no one suggested this should replace involvement in the overall Better at Home CoP though). One Coordinator felt strongly that the CoP should be integrated across all Better at Home programs; she described that the learning and sharing across all programs was very valuable to her and that she did not like the idea of First Nations programs being segregated.

The following updates to the Better at Home Coordinator Manual were suggested based on considerations of the First Nations community context:

- Marketing templates and tools
- Volunteer recruitment ideas
- How to engage, encourage and enliven community around Elders
- Job estimation skills (including staffing/crew/equipment estimations).

Volunteer Role

Volunteers are important to the delivery of services in three of the four programs. Volunteers mostly provide services related to grocery shopping (59%) and transportation (77%). However, each program develops its own work force structure and two of the four programs primarily use staff for transportation services.

Volunteers across the programs are paid an honorarium, which is also a cultural norm in First Nations communities. Some programs provide cash and others offer gift cards for groceries or meals. Maintaining long-term volunteers is very difficult due to the economic conditions of the reserves; most people need paid employment.

Better at Home Coordinators try to build community around Elders by involving community members in traditional celebrations, cultural events and intergenerational approaches. The intergenerational matching process supports learning and sharing between program staff/volunteers and Elders and proactively creates opportunities for mutual benefits across generations.

Programs recruit individuals and groups of volunteers from the community in a variety of ways, including recruiting volunteers from: youth groups and sports teams; recovery homes; employment readiness and work experience programs; staff of First Nations Social Development teams; dance groups; parent groups; college students; and 'Food Skills for Families' or other food/cooking programs.

SERVICE INTEGRATION AND ALIGNMENT

The First Nations Better at Home programs all share some degree of integration with their community medical services, which is not the case for other Better at Home programs. There is unanimous agreement among the First Nations programs that Better at Home as a service could help support community care nursing services and that coordination and case conferencing with these services would be beneficial to Better at Home overall.

Integration between Aboriginal Better at Home Programs and community medical services is demonstrated in various ways:

1. Programs are all co-located within the Nation's Health Centre. Staff often work next door to or side-by-side the Health Nurse. This proximity facilitates regular communication, from information sharing to referrals and joint problem solving to meet Elders' needs.

2. Three of the Aboriginal Better at Home programs have adopted the Mustimunx software program used by their Nations' government and services. This system enables staff working in multiple sectors (e.g., social services, Elders services or health) to access and update records of care for Elders, ensuring the files are holistic and comprehensive in nature.

3. First Nations Governments provide a variety of in-kind supports to the programs such as office space, equipment, reception services and paper and other supplies. Given that all programs serve multiple communities, office space may not be available in every community. Programs do not have access to 'storefront' spaces. This distance makes it even more important for Elders to have a single location for all their health needs.

4. In three of the programs Better at Home falls under and is managed by the Health Centre. Often the Better at Home manager is also the Nurse in Charge or the Home and Community Health Director for the Nation. In all cases, the Better at Home Coordinator works closely with the Health

Centre. The Health Centre staff are very knowledgeable about the program, making referrals and joint planning around Elders' needs a seamless activity.

In the Gitxsan program, the Better at Home Coordinator is the Nurse in Charge and the Better at Home Program Manager is the Manager of Home and Community Care, resulting in an alignment of Elder focused services. The Gitxsan Better at Home budget is also managed as part of the larger budget for Home and Community Care. While the budgets are distinct and reported separately, the rationale behind their allocation is to maximize services to Elders. See the box below for more details on how Better at Home is integrated with the Gitxsan health team.

Box 2. EXAMPLE: Gitxsan Health Team Integrates Better at Home Service Delivery

Better at Home is organized within the Gitxsan Health Team and works from multiple Health Centres within the territory to serve four communities/villages. The model of service delivery is seamless for the Elders, as the team of nurses work well together, often sharing clients and combining roles to complete services for Elders that may include some Better at Home and some Home and Community Care aspects. For example, a Gitxsan Health Nurse may see an Elder for in-home foot care and may also complete a friendly visit or document intake information for Better at Home.

The Gitxsan Health Team has adopted a "Championship" model of team organization, with one of the nurses designated as the Better at Home Champion for the team. She is responsible for the Better at Home program overall and completes the documentation for the United Way of the Lower Mainland and other related Better at Home administrative duties. She also ensures team members and communities fully understand what service Better at Home offers and how to access the program.

In the Squamish Better at Home program, although the Coordinator is not a nurse, the Better at Home program is managed by Home and Community Care. They are looking for funding to support programs being delivered under the Better at Home friendly visiting service that will align with health promotion and prevention objectives related to fall prevention and diabetes. For example, Better at Home can contribute to Elders' ability to stay at home by delivering group activities and other wellness services around these challenges.

Other on reserve services crucial to Better at Home include Operations and Maintenance, Band Administration and Social Development. These departments may offer services or resources ancillary to the Better at Home program, including large home repairs, installation of home adaptations for Elders with disabilities, financial resources for home repairs and modifications, and other resources.

> ***"This work is beyond any job, any role, any agency, any community or any government. It's about work in service to older adults, the elders."***
>
> United Way of the Lower Mainland Staff

POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS

There was consistent feedback about the need for United Way of the Lower Mainland to engage with political bodies in communities, and more broadly within the province, in order to build awareness, understanding and support for Better at Home services in First Nations communities.

Coordinators felt that developing the political relationship with First Nations Chiefs and Councils was not within their mandate, and that United Way of the Lower Mainland needed to cultivate this. They suggested that United Way of the Lower Mainland should consider doing presentations to Chief and Councils to encourage fund development, partnerships, and define what Truth and Reconciliation work means to each Nation. It would be helpful to start within the communities where Better at Home and Success By 6[14] programs exist as there are already existing relationships. Coordinators also indicated that liaisons from United Way of the Lower Mainland needed to have cultural sensitivity/safety training and the ability to work in partnership with the program staff. There was a sense that programs were sometimes micro-managed by United Way of the Lower Mainland.

Larger First Nations communities often have a Health Advisory Committee to review programs such as Better at Home and support its promotion and integration into the community health services. Planning for Elders also falls within the scope of a Comprehensive Community Plan, which is mandated by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development for all First Nations that have not completed a treaty process (which in BC is most of the 300 Nations). United Way of the Lower Mainland could benefit from being connected with these activities and could also bring its research and knowledge partners to support Elder health and wellness planning.

Small communities have found that it can be helpful to bring a new program, such as Better at Home, into the community through a lead councillor who acts as the 'champion' for the program. Better at Home is not seen as a controversial program and would be welcomed by almost any community, however, the realities of limited resources and competing needs for office space, staff time and funding means that new programs often need a champion to support them.

There is no provincial or national Indigenous organization whose mandate focuses on Elders' connections, however, the FNHA will be a key organization for future planning for the First Nations Better at Home programs. Each Nation currently delivering Better at Home has a unique relationship with FNHA staff and it would be helpful to learn more about this to better understand the needs of each Nation. United Way of the Lower Mainland could also make a presentation to the BC Assembly of First Nations, BC Union of Indian Chiefs, and First Nations Summit to create understanding and develop relationships across high-level political leadership in BC.

SERVICE SATISFACTION AND IMPACTS

Each community visited and every Elder surveyed and interviewed spoke highly of the Better at Home services. Users of the Better at Home program and their family members unanimously reported that the program met their needs and performed exceptionally well.

[14] Success by 6 Programs support the development of child and family friendly communities across the province of BC.

Time and time again, Elders described the Better at Home services as useful, timely, and friendly. They also said the program:

- Keeps them safe and prevents injury
- Helps their families cope
- Gives them something to look forward to
- Provides social connections with peers/workers in the program

Elders also identified other aspects of service delivery that had contributed to a successful experience for them, including:

- Ease of intake
- Ease of the service model (seamless)
- Real relationships with other nation members
- Cross generational activities, teaching and sharing
- Transportation
- Culturally based (i.e., use of cultural ways and norms)

Elders had suggestions for additional cultural activities they would like to see added:

- Medicine walks
- Fish and hunting camps
- Food harvesting/gathering
- Seasonal and/or territorial processes, activities or ceremonies

PROGRAM CHALLENGES

Equipment Challenges

The funding for Better at Home programs cannot be used for capital purchases and this has been a barrier for First Nation Programs given the scope and amount of yard work being done and travel distances between communities. Programs say that it is not uncommon for volunteers or staff to not have a driver's license or a vehicle. Coordinators suggested the need for United Way of the Lower Mainland to develop a capital fund or secure corporate partners that can support equipment for programs. One coordinator explained:

"I have hardly any clients that have their own mowers that are running and actually safe for use. I had two lawn mowers but one has broken down, it was a cheaper mower, not meant for the kind of stuff that it is needed for. Because there are so many lawns to do, by the time we make it to a home their lawn is usually overgrown. All of the lawns we are mowing are over 5500 sq. ft. which is really large in size. Mowing overgrown grass in such a huge area will take its toll on any mower! So right now, I am working with one lawn mower and it is just not enough. I have so many lawns that need mowing people are having to wait 4-6 weeks until we can get back there again to mow it."

Squamish Nation is the only program that contracts their yard work to contractors who provide their own equipment; however, they provided funds for the Tsleil-Waututh program to purchase their own yard work equipment. The Sto:lo program approached the John Deere Company and managed to get a reduced price on some equipment. This suggests that there may be opportunities for programs to work together for group purchase and/or to approach corporate sponsors.

Risk Management Challenges

Safety is an important issue for the First Nations Better at Home programs. Operators must be trained in equipment usage but also must assess the property for risks (e.g., hidden items under the brush, etc.) Risk considerations include rodent and animal infestations; the importance of Emergency Services being able to access a property in case of an accident; and the need for Industrial First Aid training.

Sto:lo Better at Home has created a safety video for the equipment used by Better at Home support persons and has found this a helpful resource to have each person review prior to beginning their role. This resource will be made available to other programs.

Other Program Delivery Challenges

There is confusion among Aboriginal Better at Home programs about the eligibility requirement that Elders be living alone in order to receive services. Some programs express concerns about this requirement and suggest it is limiting their intake into the program. In response to this eligibility requirement issue, some programs have simply decided that Elders who are living with family are eligible and may still require some supports, while others have chosen not to serve Elders who have family living with them due to limited capacity. The program data suggests that accepting Elders regardless of their living situation is the norm (73% live with others), however, United Way of the Lower Mainland may want to ensure consistent application and reporting on this practice.

From a practical and cultural standpoint, Better at Home Elders would benefit from telephone check-ins and group socialization/activities in their communities. This is already happening in some programs, however, participants at Paddling Together felt this needed to be acknowledged more formally as part of the service. For example, Coordinators should be able to report group outings or phone check-ins/visits as part of friendly visiting or a separate service area. Paddling Together participants also asked: *"How do you capture and report on reconnection?"* This reflection referred to the impacts the program may have on the Elder, community members and the community itself that are not normally captured via current reporting mechanisms.

Staff time is needed for referral and coordination between departments, in particular when an Elder does not fit the Better at Home eligibility criteria. Even if an elder does not qualify for Better at Home, Coordinators still try

and assist the Elder and work out a plan for support with other departments such as Maintenance and Housing, Social Development or Home and Community Care services.

The terminology 'service moment' is very misleading and does not relay the nature or complexity of the work most often involved with serving Elders living rurally. This includes:

1. Yards that are 5-10 times larger than in towns and cities. Yards often include brambles, blackberry bushes, hay, rain forest foliage and intense overgrowth leading to rodents and other safety issues.
2. Isolated homes that are far from neighbours or the Nations' core services. This increases travel time which reduces service time onsite at the Elder's home.
3. The notion of relationship at the centre of the service, meaning that in one "service moment" Elders experience a visit and other services together.

Box 3 belows summarizes some of the challenges and lessons learned from the Sto:lo Better at Home experience.

Box 3. LESSONS LEARNED: Sto:lo Better at Home Experience

The Sto:lo Better at Home Program shared their lessons from their first year of program operations at Paddling Together:

- Schedule services by community; call clients to fill the schedule
- Confirm appointments the night before by telephone
- Hosting open social events for Elders helps get the word out
- Light housekeeping is not very light
- Yards are huge and unkept and require a lot of work to maintain

THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Better at Home Aboriginal Evaluation Themes

In the Better at Home Aboriginal Evaluation six overarching themes were identified:

1. Culture and connection at the heart of service.
2. Integration of Better at Home and Health Centre services.
3. Human resource challenges.
4. Program structure and resource allocations.
5. Tracking, reporting and evaluation.
6. Collaboration between United Way of the Lower Mainland, First Nation Governments and the First Nations Health Authority.

Under each theme, sub-themes were identified and the implications of each sub-theme for the Better at Home programs were considered. Each theme, sub-theme and implication are discussed below.

1. Culture and Connection at the Heart of Services

1.1 Family and relationships

Family and relationships were identified as crucial to successfully supporting Elders. The following points about family and relationships were highlighted in the evaluation:

a) ***Relationships are at the centre of the service****:* All interactions in the program are focused on social connections. This means that staff are always 'visiting,' and during that visit depending on what is important to the Elder there could be any number of different 'services' being delivered. This makes reporting and tracking the services provided difficult.
b) ***Interdependence is the goal not independence***: Programs are constantly working to engage and connect Elders with other Elders, members of the community and family. This emphasizes the need for group-based programming versus one-to-one.
c) ***The majority of Elders live with family and receive services*****:** The history of reserves, residential schools and colonialism means that on reserve housing is owned by the Government of Canada or the First Nation. There are significant housing shortages on reserve, which means that an Elder can be living with others while at the same time may not be getting needed supports or may not necessarily be any safer than if they were living alone.
d) ***Many families have chosen to leave the reserve*****:** This means that some Elders live alone and may experience social isolation. Even when younger family members are present and live in a house allocated to the Elder, the responsibility for the house rests with the Elder or the Nation, but not necessarily the family members living there. This means often home maintenance, yard work and other repairs are the responsibility of the Elder which can be difficult for the Elder to maintain.

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- Supporting hiring local members of the Nation who speak the language and understand the customs and history.
- There are implications for how services are measured and reported (see theme 5 below).
- Opening Better at Home services to Elders who do not live alone (when capacity permits).

1.2 Adaptations to integrate culture and connection

Aboriginal Better at Home programs have made adaptations to integrate culture and connection into their approaches, including:

- All programs provide transportation to bring Elders together for lunches, community feasts or celebrations.
- Programs often offer cultural programs related to food harvesting and preserving.

Elders indicate that one of the things they appreciate the most about the program is the cultural activities, and from the program, they want more cultural activities and connections with others.

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- Programs should continue to intentionally integrate culture into all the services.

- Hiring local members of the Nation who speak the language and understand the customs, rituals and history is important.

1.3 Distance and Risk of Social Isolation

Social isolation remains a significant concern for Elders as there are huge geographic distances between reserves and communities and often family members are not available to provide support or transportation. Large travel distances means less connection time for Elders. For example, the Sto:lo First Nations Better at Home program travels to 21 unique communities and the Cowichan program travels significant distances between reserves that often require overnight stays. Not all staff or volunteers own vehicles which creates further challenges for travelling to the many locations on the reserve. Social isolation is exacerbated by lack of transportation.

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- Developing a mechanism to reflect and compensate for travel time in the First Nations Better at Home programs.
- How can United Way of the Lower Mainland learn more about the travel needs of communities and consider innovative solutions to address these needs? (i.e. consider purchasing vehicles or using shared vehicles if bus or shuttle services are already available)

2. Integration of Better at Home and Health Centre Services is a Strength

2.1 Integration of Services

Aboriginal Better at Home programs fall under the mandate of the Home and Community Care Departments at Health Centres. There is a mindset that both the medical Health Centre services and the non-medical Better at Home services are owned and delivered by the First Nation Government. This mindset reflects the need to more closely align these services. The Better at Home Coordinators and Health Centre staff are focused on serving the Elders and do not distinguish between what belongs in one program or the other in the same way as mainstream programs do.

This idea of program 'ownership' does not fit the First Nations cultural context, nor how the Elder centred delivery model has evolved. As a result, there are significant implications for staffing, budgets, services and infrastructure that vary across all four programs. Proximity can support collaboration when the organizational mindset is developed to support this. Co-location is a physical demonstration of this collaboration that further strengthens alignment and integration.

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- Supporting the design of elder-centric services that are integrated in the community.
- What if there was a shared policy that placed the Elder at the heart of the service for all providers? What would that mean for how they would need to communicate and collaborate? For how resources were shared and allocated?
- How important is co-location?

- How important are mindsets as a driver of practice?
- What are the current FNHA 'practices' that may unintentionally create disconnect between other providers and may impact the quality of services?
- Greater promotion efforts are needed to engage First Nation communities, First Nations Summit, BC Union of Indian Chiefs, local community at each location, etc. It is important to emphasize the importance of the work that Better at Home is doing and to work towards establishing partnerships.

3. Human Resource Challenges

3.1 Better at Home Coordinator Training and Succession Planning

Two key health human resource challenges related to Better at Home Coordinators were identified:

- ***Program Coordinator training and resources:*** The Better at Home program is having a positive impact on economic development through employment and training in First Nations communities. The Coordinator role in particular requires a diverse range of skillsets in one position. On the one hand the role is a professional role with strong geriatric assessment and communication skills required, and on the other hand it is a project manager for yard work. The Coordinators always think holistically about the needs of the Elders.

- ***Succession planning and stability***: Ongoing Coordinator training and succession planning is critical for staff transitions when service continuity can be difficult to maintain. Supporting transitions with significant cross over, additional coaching over the first year, and other supports is an important consideration for United Way of the Lower Mainland in order to ensure stability, continuity and consistent services. For the Tsleil-Waututh program, the First Nations Government pays for a program coach specifically for this purpose.

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include the following suggestions that were made by Coordinators:

- Creating a First Nations Better at Home CoP and support this group to identify annual priorities for their shared learning (three of the Coordinators supported this idea).
- Keeping the existing CoP that includes all programs and support genuine cross-cultural learning related to Elders/Seniors connectivity and intergenerational, reciprocal relationship building (the Gitxsan Coordinator felt strongly that segregating Aboriginal program staff was not at all useful and would reduce the scope of new ideas and information).
- Updating the Better at Home Coordinator Manual to include:
    - Marketing templates, tools, and funding and sponsorship opportunities
    - Volunteer recruitment ideas and support
    - How to engage, encourage and enliven 'community' around Elders
    - Guidance in how to estimate jobs (yard work)

3.2 Volunteer Recruitment

With the exception of the Gitxsan program, the First Nations Better at Home programs have reported struggles with

volunteer recruitment. Unemployment is high in most communities, and the economic conditions often mean that there is a need for people to have paid work. There is a culture of acknowledging volunteer time with honorariums in most communities, with gift cards or cash honorariums used to acknowledge volunteers. The Gitxsan program notes that paying honorariums is less expensive than hiring contractors so they budget for this and deliver several services largely with volunteers. Other Coordinators have tried this approach and found it works temporarily but not in the long term.

Ideally, communities want to be able to pay people for their services, which would require additional program funding. All programs indicated that additional paid roles could help ease the complexity and workload of the Coordinator role and also result in the provision of more services to Elders. What in-kind contributions can the First Nation Governments provide to support shifting resources in this way (e.g., use of vehicles and equipment)? How can formal agreements be developed with each Nation that support ongoing relationships, support, development and reciprocity?

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- Using paid contractors or staff means devoting more of the program budgets to manpower. Can First Nations offer in-kind supports in exchange?
- Supporting the First Nation Better at Home programs to develop educational internships that promote education and job laddering opportunities in their communities. United Way of the Lower Mainland could help support and develop these types of collaborations.
- There is a need for additional paid staff or contractors to support Better at Home programs. This is a conversation United Way of the Lower Mainland could have with the Ministry of Health, FNHA and First Nation Governments. How might the program funding be used differently to increase education, training and employment while caring for elders?

4. Need to Adapt Program Structure and Resources

4.1 Definition of Services

The following challenges were identified with the way Better at Home Services are currently defined and reported in the First Nations context:

- The service moment construct is based on assumptions of one-on-one and single service delivery for a set time/appointment.
- Group outings and phone check-ins/visits are currently not counted in any service area, and should be included as a part of the friendly visiting service area or a newly defined service area.
- The reporting requirements regarding Elders living alone need to be clarified and adjusted as necessary given the context of living arrangements on reserve.
- In the First Nation context, where relationships are at the centre of services, the focus is on friendly visiting first and foremost, and then over time the Better at Home provider might engage with several different tasks as part of the visit.
- Friendly visiting assumes one-on-one connection with an Elder. The preferred and more commonly supported connections in these programs, however, are supporting Elders to connect with other Elders and with

community.

- The yard work service assumes a single person working in an urban yard. However, in the First Nations Better at Home context work may be carried out over several hours or visits, with a team of 3-4 people.

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- The monitoring and reporting structure needs to be re-designed to more accurately measure and reflect the First Nation Better at Home context.
- There is a need to co-design and develop a Theory of the Change and evaluative framework for the Aboriginal Better at Home program. This will inform the expectations and outcomes for future years and more accurately reflect the context of services.

4.2 Resources and Equipment

There is a need for designated capital funding or secure corporate partners that can support equipment for programs. In some programs there is a need for commercial yard work equipment. The Gitxsan program also indicates that snow blowers would save time and work force costs for their snow shoveling services.

The Squamish program contracts their yard work and contractors have their own equipment. The Tsleil-Waututh program has equipment funded by the Squamish Nation. The Sto:lo program has one ride-on lawnmower that was funded through 'targeted funds.'

On reserve, however, more commercial equipment is required to address yard work needs. The programs require commercial grade equipment to effectively maintain yards – a typical yard is about half the size of a soccer field. Initially, there was an attempt to have volunteers help with this work, but because of the intensity of the work they have shifted to contractors. Multiple Better at Home Coordinators commented on the scale of yard work in their program, for example, one stated: *"Yard work takes at least an hour, sometimes even two hours or in some case half a day."*

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- The Paddling Together recommendations and subsequent interviews with program staff highlighted the need for transportation and commercial yard work equipment to meet the maintenance needs on reserve. This equipment is needed to deliver services effectively and these resources are not equitably available in all communities.
- In the Paddling Together Report the following recommendation was made *"Better at Home is limited in its budget areas to fund the purchase and maintenance of equipment for service delivery, particularly for light yard work which constitutes 51% of services delivered to support our Elders. We ask that the Ministry of Health and UWLM fully review this and provide funds for equipment through direct funding, or by creating a partnership with businesses to fund this portion for the BH services."*
- Relationship development would be beneficial within each of the communities with the Chief and Council and Health Directors. A strategy that meets the needs of each distinct Nation could be developed with some joint sponsorship or cooperative buying that no single Nation could leverage on their own. All Coordinators were

supportive of collaborating to secure program equipment resources.

4.3 Meeting Long-term Program Demand

There is a need to expand the available services in the program as well as to provide services to more Elders to ensure long-term program demand is met:

- ***Expanding Programs and services:*** There is often a need for additional home maintenance services; for example, the Squamish program has the need for window washing and gutter cleaning in their community. The Squamish program also wants to add social programs that are focused on active aging priorities such as fall prevention and depression. Reaching Elders with prevention approaches is essential, and a priority for several of the programs.
- ***More Elders need services:*** In all programs, there is a need for more Elder services than the program has the capacity to provide. Several of the programs do not promote their services as they are at capacity, however, Cowichan continues to try to meet all of the needs in their Nation. Most programs have wait lists for yard work and some like the Squamish program believe they could accommodate a few more Elders for housekeeping. All of the programs know that there are Elders who are not aware of the program who could use it. The programs have already changed intake eligibility to 65 years as the minimum age and reduced delivery to 4 hours of service/month/Elder. Each program projects an additional 15-20 more Elders could benefit from the service in their area (projection excludes the Tsleil-Waututh program).

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- How can collaboration with Ministry of Health and FNHA support efficiencies and program sustainability? How can United Way of the Lower Mainland support active aging initiatives in the programs and integrate those services into Better at Home programming?

5. Tracking, Reporting and Evaluation

5.1 Tracking, Reporting & Evaluation

The following challenges with current methods for tracking and reporting data and evaluation of programs were identified:

- The current reporting mechanisms are not an accurate reflection of the work done in First Nation communities – they are not comparable to other programs due to travel times and the nature of yard work.
- The service moment definition does not work in the Aboriginal Better at Home program context. The measures and cost assessments are not comparable with other programs.
- The familial culture of First Nations is relationship based and the current evaluation and reporting structure do not adequately capture this. Interactions are relationship-based and that often means when you are with an Elder, you might engage in a variety of activities from cooking to cleaning and yard work and discerning medical needs all within one visit. The relationship is central and the tasks are almost always combined. Better at Home

reporting and monitoring is structured in a way that places the task at the center of the reporting process. How can Better at Home Coordinators 'count' service moments when in their frame of reference, they had one visit and accomplished numerous tasks? Typically visits encompass multiple different activities and these activities are often not tracked or quantified.

- There is no current way of capturing the group-based connections cultivated through Better at Home or the complexity of 'visiting' as a part of other service delivery.

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- The Paddling Together participants called for the flexibility to document and measure program success and adapt program services to meet their unique needs: "*We ask for greater flexibility and understanding of our needs as per the full intent of the TRC and its Calls to Action. This includes, but is not limited to: The ability to capture data and success in our own ways to help systems better understand our needs from what's important to us. The ability to grow and develop our services to best meet the needs of our Elders."*
- United Way of the Lower Mainland should consider a cost benefit formula for these four programs that is based on hours of service versus service moments. When 'service moments' are compared across all programs it is not fully representative of the nature of service delivery in the Aboriginal Better at Home context. Reporting that yard work services for Elders required a determined amount of time in a given month far more accurately represents the program delivery.
- United Way of the Lower Mainland needs to create a means of distinguishing and reporting on group based social connections versus one-to-one visiting.
- Aboriginal Better at Home programs need to identify what outcomes they are targeting among the Elders they serve, and then be supported to assess these outcomes. The distinction between independence and interdependence is one example of how important this work is if United Way of the Lower Mainland wants to capture and scale these impacts and contribute to the broader field.
- First Nation Better at Home Coordinators need individualized coaching to support their documentation and tracking approaches and ensure consistent data collection. This may include development of new methods such as tape recording or storytelling.

6. Relationships with First Nations Governments and FNHA

6.1 Relationship Building with First Nations Governments

United Way of the Lower Mainland should lead relationship building with First Nations Governments and identify a single liaison who is culturally sensitive and can promote and practice cultural safety and trauma informed approaches. United Way of the Lower Mainland should begin by building relationships in the communities where Better at Home and Success By 6 programs operate as there is already an existing relationship.

United Way of the Lower Mainland staff members suggested that there was a role for their provincial staff in developing stronger relationships with First Nations Governments in order to strengthen collaboration and joint problem solving around challenges such as staff training, additional demand and capital funding resources.

There is already support for the Better at Home program in the form of in-kind and cash investments from First Nations Governments. Examples of such investments include:

- In every program there is shared space, and in most programs there is also a shared database with the First Nation Health Centre staff.
- In the programs with strong alignment between the Health Centre nursing staff and the Better at Home staff, this integration of human resources is a benefit to both programs.
- In the Squamish program, the First Nation Government has supported an external consultant to provide staff coaching when there is a new staff person stepping into a role and this has resulted in seamless service delivery.
- For the Gitxsan and Squamish programs, the First Nations Governments have provided funding to support equipment purchases.

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- Coordinators need United Way of the Lower Mainland to be their voices in a complicated, political and competitive funding environment. Some of the Coordinators may not have direct access to their local Government, but rather work through the Health Centre management staff.
- Given that First Nations Governments are already supportive of Better at Home at some level, this collaboration can be further strengthened. The focus of this next level of relationship building may vary between programs, as in one program it might be focused on a discussion of how to support capital equipment purchases, while in another it might be related to how to offer additional wellness services or provide staff training.
- These relationships are also key to the ability of United Way of the Lower Mainland to demonstrate their Truth and Reconciliation Commitments. There is a need to listen, learn and develop local level agreements about what this might look like in each community, and how United Way of the Lower Mainland can work with the First Nations to support the commitment to broader public understanding and awareness raising.

6.2 Relationship Building with FNHA

United Way of the Lower Mainland needs to engage with FNHA at regional and provincial levels. Across the four programs there are a range of different relationships between Better at Home program staff and the FNHA. In some cases, the Coordinator has no direct connection with the FNHA, but suggests that this is a Health Centre Manager role. In all cases, the FNHA is acknowledged as the funder of health services, but the First Nation Government is really the primary decision-maker around service focus and allocation of resources. This fits with our understanding of the FNHA approach – which is to enable communities to provide the services they need in the way that makes sense for them.

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs include:

- United Way of the Lower Mainland has not developed formal liaisons in communities; this liaison function must demonstrate cultural safety, humility and be trauma informed. We recommend that the orientation is towards empowerment, reciprocity and leadership versus management.
- United Way of the Lower Mainland could benefit from advice from Aboriginal Better at Home coordinators

about who to connect with and how (which varies from nation to nation).

- United Way of the Lower Mainland could co-develop and co-design service principles to aspire to for all of the Aboriginal Better at Home programs. This would keep the principles and aspirations of service delivery front and centre, and could also inform future evaluations.

6.3 Reconciliation

United Way of the Lower Mainland has made Reconciliation commitments (see Appendix 1) and currently these commitments are not reflective of the policies or practices. This can change. There is a need for extensive training and systemic change within United Way of the Lower Mainland regarding the impacts of colonialism, The Indian Act, residential schools and the many other associated injustices suffered by our Aboriginal Peoples. Programs also acknowledged that United Way of the Lower Mainland needs to connect with their Governments around this topic and ask what is needed to support reconciliation efforts in each community.

> *"I know I would like to see people take their lens off and see how our First Nations people live, it is not only in the off reserve situation. Elders are very unique and there is a reason for that. Put yourself in those shoes and feel what they felt, many have been hurt many times and promised many things. Live in those shoes. Try not to be so judgmental and assume that you understand, many people have not been educated or been exposed and reconciliation should be approached like that."*
>
> Better at Home Coordinator

The implications of this sub-theme for Aboriginal Better at Home programs, which were also informed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland's Reconciliation Commitments, include:

- United Way of the Lower Mainland commits to continue working with First Nations partners to strengthen the capacity of First Nations organizations and associations to plan, lead and deliver local initiatives in keeping with the 'right to self-determination' as identified by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- United Way of the Lower Mainland commits to continue supporting First Nations communities to increase public understanding of Aboriginal life, cultural awareness, and cultural safety across BC.
- One of the Paddling Together recommendations relates to the need for ongoing cultural training and awareness raising among other agencies and government services within the larger community-based seniors' services sector: *"Better at Home has taken off in our nations and our communities. However, we still see gaps in the health care system personnel's understating of who we are and what we need when we have to interchange with them. For this reason, we ask that the Ministry of Health, the Health Authorities and agencies that deliver health services take part in an ongoing process to learn from and about First Nation's peoples and communities in a way that is meaningful and sustainable."*
- Provide training in trauma informed or response-based practices (in early development) for staff who are working with First Nations.
- Work with the Aboriginal Better at Home programs to strengthen the understanding among all Better at Home programs and other agencies such as health authorities and the broader community-based seniors' services sector.
- The Aboriginal Better at Home programs and Coordinators have valuable resources in terms of these program relationships – these need to be used.

Better at Home Aboriginal Evaluation Recommendations

Theme	Recommendations
1. Culture and connection at the heart of service.	a. Support hiring local members of the Nation who speak the language and understand the customs and history. b. Develop a mechanism to reflect and compensate for travel time in the First Nation Better at Home program and learn more about the travel needs and consider innovative solutions and ideas to address these needs. c. Open Better at Home services to Elders who do not live alone (as capacity permits).
2. Integration of Better at Home and Health Centre services is a strength	a. Support the design of elder-centric services and social connections that are integrated in the community. b. Continue to integrate the non-medical and medical services to provide supports to the 'whole person'.
3. Human resource challenges	a. Create a First Nations Better at Home CoP and support the group to identify annual priorities for their shared learning. b. Advocate for improved funding for program enhancement and expansion. c. Keep the existing CoP and support genuine cross-cultural learning related to Elders/Seniors connectivity and intergenerational, reciprocal relationship building. d. Update the Better at Home Coordinator Manual to include: • Marketing templates, tools, funding and sponsorship opportunities • Volunteer recruitment ideas and support • How to engage, encourage and enliven 'community' around Elders • Guidance in how to estimate jobs (yard work).
4. Need to adapt program structure and resource allocations	a. Co-design, develop and implement a distinct Theory of the Change and evaluative framework for the Aboriginal Better at Home program. Following this process, re-design the reporting and monitoring mechanisms to more accurately measure and reflect the First Nations context. b. This re-design should consider a cost benefit formula for the programs that is based on hours of service versus service moments, as well as storytelling and other ways of capturing data consistently across programs.
5. Tracking, reporting and evaluation	Addressed in Recommendation 4 above.

6. Collaboration between United Way of the Lower Mainland, First Nations Government and FNHA	a. United Way of the Lower Mainland develop formal liaisons with FNHA and each distinct Chief and Council. b. Develop relationships with BCUIC, First Nations Summit and BC Assembly of First Nations. In the process, demonstrate cultural safety, humility and practice trauma informed approaches. c. Address the need for extensive training and systemic change within United Way of the Lower Mainland that reflects reconciliation and cultural safety practices. d. Provide leadership on the need for cultural training and awareness raising among other agencies and government services within the larger community-based seniors services sector. e. United Way of the Lower Mainland to embrace and institute practices to bring reconciliation to life. What this means to each First Nations Better at Home community must be explored. The following practices are recommended: •Zero tolerance for racial bias •Hiring practices that support diversity •Indigenous cultural safety training •Meaningful engagement from governance and leadership to address systemic barriers •A commitment to engagement and systemic change •Trauma informed practices

APPENDIX 1. UWLM TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT

Internal commitments:

- UWLM commits to providing ongoing cultural awareness training to educate staff and volunteers to learn about and appreciate Aboriginal people's history and its current day impacts from Aboriginal Elders, educators and Aboriginal partner agencies.
- UWLM commits to engaging Aboriginal communities in decision making processes and planning, and to explore other ways to increase the participation of Aboriginal people within the organization. This will build upon the existing UWLM Success By 6 Aboriginal Engagement Framework and support organizational transformation.

External commitments:

- UWLM commits to developing a protocol and continue the practice of acknowledging First Nations territory during public events and meetings.
- UWLM commits to continue working with Aboriginal partners to strengthen the capacity of Aboriginal organizations and associations to plan, lead and deliver local initiatives in keeping with the "right to self-determination" as identified by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- UWLM also commits to continue supporting Aboriginal communities to increase public understanding of Aboriginal life, cultural awareness, and cultural safety within the Lower Mainland and across British Columbia.

APPENDIX 2. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Program Goal or Objective	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Collection Methods
Offer basket of seven services to Elders residing at home	• What is offered? • How many are served? • What services are used most? • Are there other services requested frequently?	• Number served • Services offered	• Data review • Better at Home reports
Offer services to Indigenous Elders from a cultural basis	• How are services adapted to be culturally based in their operations and services? • Is there anything from a cultural perspective that should be offered to Elders as part of the Better at Home complement? • Are there Indigenous people involved with all aspects of administration and delivery? • Is there a plan in place to enhance the cultural understanding of non-First Nation people involved with the service?	• Stories and input from Elders	• Interviews • Surveys • Circle Sessions
Offer services that meet the needs of Elders and their supports	• What services are used and well received by First Nation Elders? Why? • What are the aspects of a successful service for the Elders?	• Stories and input rated by Elders and supporters	• Interviews • Surveys • Circle Sessions
Offer cost effective, accessible services across communities	• What are the costs of service delivery in First Nation communities? • Are the resources used in the way that best supports the Elder, the community and the Better at Home structure?	• Data and reports from the Better at Home provincial office, (possible survey queries with Health Directors or others)	• Data review and input from programs

Understand the different structures, opportunities and realities for Aboriginal Elders and communities	• What are the structures and opportunities unique to your nation in relation to the Better at Home program?	• Documented models and experiences.	• Interviews, surveys, report and data review
Methodology Additions			
Scope of Services	• Collaborations • Program distinctions • Data related follow up	• Themed and Analyzed	• Coordinator Interviews
Presentation of Themes	• Three distinct webinars where the themes were refined and presented to distinct groups including Reference Group	• Detailed notes kept of conversations and suggestions	• Three Webinars
Data Analysis	• Program report analysis and theming	• Data theming and comparative data	• Program reports