

---

# Accreditation Community Living

## *Our Journey to Excellence*

---

April 2005—Volume 1, issue 1



Greater Vancouver Community Services Society



### **What is Accreditation?**

Accreditation is a peer review process designed to ensure that the participating service provider is delivering services that meet international standards in key organizational areas such as quality assurance, accountability and administrative competence.

### **Why Accreditation Now?**

The primary funding authority (Ministry of Children and Family Development) has made accreditation a requirement for all Community Living service providers receiving over \$500,000 in funding from the provincial government.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Greater Vancouver Community Services Society (GVCSS) formally launched the accreditation process for our Society in January 2005. It marked the beginning of a 12 month process that will culminate in a three year Accreditation Certificate with CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities). Our Society is committed to a collaborative process that will involve all stakeholder groups including the people we support, their families and advocates, volunteers, staff, managers, Board members, funding authorities, community members and other interested parties. A steering committee chaired by our Director of Community Living (Madeleine Beaton), will be responsible for demonstrating that GVCSS is providing services to persons with developmental disabilities in accordance with the standards established by the accrediting body - CARF. Our goal is to achieve accreditation from CARF by the spring of 2006.

### **Who is CARF?**

CARF is a non-profit organization based in Tucson, Arizona that accredits a range of health and social service programs. They research and set standards for various programs throughout North America, and then conduct site surveys at agencies like GVCSS to determine whether appropriate standards are being met. In addition to their excellent reputation in this field, CARF is also viewed as a reputable accrediting agency by the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

### **Mock Survey Planned for September 2005**

Prior to scheduling our site survey with the CARF team early in 2006, we will have a mock survey (September 2005) to determine how prepared we are for the actual Accreditation Survey. The intent of the mock survey is for experienced mentors from agencies who have already gone through Accreditation to assist us by reviewing our progress in developing policies and procedures and to point out where changes need to be made to meet CARF standards.

---

## Who is Involved from GVCSS?

Everyone in the Community Living Department will be expected to play a role in this Accreditation process whether it be through staff/client satisfaction surveys, sitting on committees or simply providing input via our staff meetings. We want to ensure that this is an inclusive planning process.

The Steering Committee, comprised of Madeleine Beaton (Project Chair), Ron McLeod, Mary Norris, Robin Grant, Diane Raniseth and Consultant Sue Hill, will be providing overall direction to the Accreditation process. Also, Melanie Mendonca has been seconded from the Community Living program to be the liaison between the program and the Steering Committee. Although this group will be steering the project, we wish to emphasize that the success of this initiative will depend upon the collaborative efforts of everyone involved with our Community Living Program.

## How Do We Achieve the Goal of Accreditation?

CARF provides a set of standards for the Society to meet or exceed. At the proposed site survey date (approximately February 2006) the CARF surveyors will check if we are meeting the standards by reviewing our Agency documents (e.g. policies, procedures, service plans, etc.) visiting and observing our group homes and interviewing program staff, clients and family members.

---

# Next Steps

## What Can You Do?

The Accreditation Steering Committee is in the process of looking for feedback from staff and family members to learn more about what is being done well in Community Living and also where improvements can be made. You may have already received a survey questionnaire asking for your input about the program and the Society. We would greatly appreciate receiving your comments along with hearing from you in person.

*For more information on the Accreditation Project at GVCSS*, please contact the Accreditation Project Manager Madeleine Beaton or any of the people listed on the Steering Committee. We can be reached at head office by phone at 604-737-4900, or you can arrange to meet with one of us to discuss Accreditation in greater detail.

Please stay tuned for the next Accreditation Bulletin which will be posted on the Agency Web site and included with our monthly newsletter.