

## **Report from the Human Resources Department**

*Submitted by Karen Foster, Human Resources Manager*

### **Introduction**

The purpose of the report is to provide an update to the Executive Director of the Society's HR activities and performance, as well as to set several goals for improvement over the next year. The report covers the time period of April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008, in accordance with the Agency's fiscal year end.

### **Staffing**

The staffing at GVCSS is complex, as we provide Community Living and Home Support services 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. Our HandyDART operations also have extended operating hours, with the first runs of the day leaving the parking lots at 6:00am and the last runs returning at 11:30pm.

Adequate staff is needed to achieve organization outcomes, provide quality service, and ensure client safety. The Human Resources team is charged with the responsibility of hiring employees in a timely manner, to ensure the effective delivery of services. A casual registry is maintained by each separate program, and is utilized to provide coverage for the leaves of regular employees, or provide relief for temporary workload situations.

GVCSS currently has 339 regular, unionized employees, 236 casual, unionized employees and 22 non-union excluded employees, for a total of 597 employees organization-wide.

### **Recruitment, Retention, and Succession**

During the time period of this report, there were a total of 95 new employees hired by GVCSS, of which 2 were regular, unionized employees, 92 were casual, unionized employees, and 1 was a permanent non-contract employee. This is a 27% increase in the number of people hired over last year.

Internal recruitment was very active as well, with 76 postings being circulated in the Agency during the year. There were 24 internal vacancies for Community Living, 37 for Simon Fraser HandyDART, 7 for Richmond HandyDART, 7 for Home Support and 1 for Home Support Administration. Of the internal vacancies, 71 were filled by GVCSS employees, and the remainder were filled by external candidates.

To maintain a large pool of qualified candidates on file, the HR team advertises through multiple venues. In particular, the most common recruitment sources utilized over the past year include the following paid media: The Vancouver Sun/Province, local newspapers (Vancouver Courier, Richmond Review, North Shore News, Burnaby/New Westminster Leader, Westender), monster.ca, BCjobs.ca, BC Employment Broadcast and the BC Human Resources Management Association. A new venue used for recruiting this year was AM 730 radio. Using this Lower Mainland traffic radio station we were able to hire 20 casual HandyDART drivers in a 2 month period. In the last fiscal year, the cost of advertising for vacancies was approximately \$11700.00. This is an increase of \$1000 from last year, an accomplishment and confirmation of cost effective advertising methods considering that there were 20 more new hires than last year. Common no cost media used for recruiting display ads include: Human Resources Development Canada website, craigslist.com, workingnonprofits.ca, kijiji.com, 50plus.com, post-secondary institutions (Justice Institute of BC, BCIT), North Shore Driving School and Bestway Driving School and the GVCSS website.

The turnover at GVCSS amongst regular employees was very low during this past year, as can be demonstrated below by the Turnover Statistics 2007 table. The turnover rate was the same as in the previous year 2006 at approximately 6% of employees. Voluntary turnover includes resignations, and involuntary turnover includes terminations, layoffs, deceased employees and mandatory retirements. Due to provincial legislation, mandatory retirements ended on December 31, 2007. There were 21 regular employees who exited the Agency, which equated to a total turnover percentage of 5.8%, of which voluntary turnover was 2.49% and involuntary turnover was 3.32%. GVCSS has very fair and equitable employment practices, a competitive salary and benefits package, and offers rewarding career opportunities. The satisfaction of our staff is indicative in our low turnover rates and the fact that almost 50% of our workforce has been employed by GVCSS for ten years or longer.

At GVCSS, effort is made to promote from within whenever possible, to ensure the retention and development of our staff. As a result, there was one non-contract excluded vacancy that was

filled by internal staff this year. In Community Living, the Supervisor for Doman House was promoted to the newly created position of Program Coordinator.

<b>TURNOVER STATISTICS - 2007</b>					
<b>Turnover for Regular Employees by Department</b>					
<b>Department</b>	<b>Employee count March 31/08</b>	<b>Number of employees who left from April 1/07 – March 31/08</b>	<b>Percentage of voluntary turnover</b>	<b>Percentage of non-voluntary turnover</b>	<b>Percentage of total turnover</b>
Simon Fraser HandyDART	71	4	2.82%	2.82%	5.63%
Richmond HandyDART	24	1	4.17%	0%	4.17%
Community Living	66	6	4.55%	4.55%	9.09%
Home Support	167	7	1.20%	2.99%	4.19%
Home Support Administration	11	2	9.09%	9.09%	18.18%
Administration	22	1	0.00%	4.55%	4.55%
<b>Turnover for Regular Employees Organization-wide</b>					
	<b>Employee count March 31/08</b>	<b>Number of employees who left in 2007</b>	<b>Percentage of voluntary turnover</b>	<b>Percentage of non-voluntary turnover</b>	<b>Percentage of total turnover</b>
GVCSS Employees	361	21	2.49%	3.32%	5.82%
* Voluntary turnover includes resignations. Involuntary turnover includes terminations, layoffs, and mandatory retirements which ended December 31, 2007.					

Turnover of casual employees was much higher than that of our regular employees. There were 84 casual employees who exited the agency in 2007, which equates to a total turnover percentage of 35.6%, of which voluntary turnover was 18.64% and involuntary turnover was 16.95%. This is demonstrated on the Turnover Statistics 2007 table below. The turnover for casual employees in 2007 was higher than 2006. The high turnover could be related both to a very competitive job market currently occurring in the Lower Mainland as well as casual employees not meeting the availability requirements of the collective agreement. In an effort to reduce the high

turnover for casual employees we introduced exit interviews with all casual employees leaving the agency. Previously only regular employees were given an exit interview. The exit interview assists HR to understand reasons for turnover and we are working hard to reduce casual turnover numbers. Methods that have been implemented to reduce turnover this year include ensuring casual job candidates have a realistic expectation of the number of hours of work they will potentially have, offering a longer training time, and for HandyDART employees, showing a DVD of the typical work day.

<b>TURNOVER STATISTICS - 2007</b>					
<b>Turnover for Casual Employees by Department</b>					
<b>Department</b>	<b>Employee count March 31/08</b>	<b>Number of employees who left from April 1/07 – March 31/08</b>	<b>Percentage of voluntary turnover</b>	<b>Percentage of non-voluntary turnover</b>	<b>Percentage of total turnover</b>
Simon Fraser HandyDART	31	30	48.39%	48.39%	96.77%
Richmond HandyDART	22	1	4.55%	0.00%	4.55%
Community Living	38	13	23.68%	10.53%	34.21%
Home Support	141	37	12.77%	13.48%	26.24%
Home Support Administration	4	3	25.00%	50.00%	75.00%
Administration	0	0	0%	0%	0%
<b>Turnover for Casual Employees Organization-wide</b>					
	<b>Employee count March 31/08</b>	<b>Number of employees who left in 2007</b>	<b>Percentage of voluntary turnover</b>	<b>Percentage of non-voluntary turnover</b>	<b>Percentage of total turnover</b>
GVCSS Employees	236	84	18.64%	16.95%	35.59%
* Voluntary turnover includes resignations. Involuntary turnover includes terminations, layoffs, mandatory retirement which ended December 31, 2007 and deceased employees					

### **Responsibilities and Roles**

Job descriptions are in place for all unionized and non-contract staff positions and all are current and reviewed on a regular basis. New job descriptions were created this year, with the appropriate role assessments conducted, for a couple of positions. One of these included the position of Program Coordinator for Community Living. This position participates in the administration of the group homes and acts in the place of the Community Living Director to cover holidays and all absences. At Simon Fraser HandyDART a lead Driver Trainer position was created. This position supervises the training and development of all drivers and conducts yearly ride alongs to ensure Custom Transit Drivers operate the vehicles safely. This year the Human Resources department hired an Occupational Health and Safety Consultant for a year long contract to assist with the health and safety needs of all GVCSS programs.

### **Policies and Procedures**

Employment policies, guidelines, practices and procedures are in place to guide the actions of staff and to determine fair approaches in the treatment of staff.

Unionized staff in Community Living belong to the BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU), unionized staff in Home Support are members of the BCGEU and the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, and unionized employees in Richmond and Simon Fraser HandyDART belong to the Canadian Auto Workers Union. These bargaining unit employees are governed by the Health Services and Support – Community Subsector collective agreement that is negotiated by the Health Employers' Association BC on behalf of its members.

A new Memorandum of agreement was written this year for HandyDART driver trainers. This memorandum increased the driver trainer premium from 25 cents per hour to 1 dollar per hour and will be in effect until December 31, 2008.

Provincial government legislation this year introduced a ban to mandatory retirement. In light of the new legislation the agency introduced more stringent selection and performance management techniques to ensure employees are mentally and physically able to perform their required job duties. The pre employment medical form has been revamped to allow for

more in-depth information to be supplied by the Attending Physician in the recruiting phase. Regular employees over 65 years of age continue to receive medical, dental, extended health, group life and accidental death and dismemberment benefits. The current age limitation of 65 under the Long Term Disability Plan is remains in effect.

Working alone procedures were developed and implemented this year for Community Living employees working the overnight shift. To ensure their safety while alone in the group homes a check in procedure has been implemented. At three pre scheduled times between midnight and 7 a.m. overnight staff call a designated buddy working at another home to confirm they are safe and well. Emergency procedures are in place if there is no answer to their phone call. This year an agency wide policy for Working Alone is being written and program specific check in procedures will be created for Administration, Home Support and HandyDART.

Ensuring there is an active Labour Management Committee is a requirement of the collective agreement. Each department holds their own joint Labour Management meetings, and HR often attends, upon the request of the Department Director/Manager. Issues that are brought forward in the meetings are resolved in a timely manner whenever possible.

Employment Standards legislation is followed for excluded and exempt employees, and Human Rights legislation is adhered to for all employees and volunteers.

### **Orientation and Training**

All new staff members receive an initial orientation at head office that is conducted by Human Resources. There are organization policies, procedures and practices that are reviewed, as well as department-specific information. The orientation also includes a review of Health and Safety policies, payroll and benefits information, union contact information, a Q&A session, and the completion of new hire documentation. Orientations are scheduled for group sessions, whenever possible. The sessions are approximately 3 hours in length. To welcome employees to the Agency, all new hires receive a gift. The gift that was purchased for this year was a GVCSS pocket sized day book/calendar. This provides the new employees with GVCSS memorabilia to

enhance a sense of belonging to the Agency and assists them in planning their work day. This year an orientation feedback form was introduced. At the end of their orientation, employees are given a chance to evaluate the orientation. This feedback helps Human Resources determine strengths and weaknesses of the orientation session and is useful in planning future sessions.

Health and Safety training is held on a monthly basis for all new employees. This is a 2 hour session including fire safety, bomb threat, earthquake, power outage, flood and medical emergency/critical incident. Half of the training is conducted by our nurse and teaches infection control and WHMIS.

Home Support employees are given an additional 4 hours of training on Meds, Catheter care and other skills essential for their own and their clients' safety at work.

Community Living employees are required to maintain a current Emergency Adult First Aid/CPR certificate. The expiry dates of First Aid/CPR are monitored by Human Resources through the Employee Management Information System, and reminder letters are sent out to all staff. Employees who fail to renew their First Aid/CPR in a timely manner are placed on an unpaid leave of absence until such time as they have completed the renewal process. Employees are reimbursed for the cost of their First Aid/CPR upon successful completion of the course.

Certification is a desirable qualification for all Home Support and Community Living employees. All new hires are required to hold their certification from a provincially recognized College program. An equivalent combination of education, experience and training may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Student placements are provided in Community Living and Home Support programs for practicum students throughout the year based on requests from provincially recognized College programs.

### **Performance Appraisals**

Performance appraisals are the responsibility of the direct supervisor. However, this year changes were implemented to the appraisal process which includes tracking completion of the appraisals on an annual basis. Human

Resources also provides advice related to performance issues as required.

The performance appraisal system addresses the specific requirements, skills, and abilities as laid out in the job description, as well as performance improvement goals for employees as required.

Performance appraisals are completed after the initial probation period and annually thereafter. An addition to the appraisal process this year, in an effort to ensure that all of our employees are performing their jobs in a manner that is safe to themselves and to their clients, is that the annual evaluation process now includes a physical assessment. Employees in each program are observed during the course of their work performing their regular work duties by either the Occupational Health and Safety Consultant for Community Living, Driver Trainer for HandyDART or Nurse for Home Support. Any issues arising from the physical assessment are forwarded in a confidential manner to the Program Director and Human Resources, and discussed with employees at a later date after the assessment.

Employees are required to sign the performance appraisal, and they may choose to either agree or disagree with the appraisal. Should an employee not agree with the content of their appraisal, they have the right to appeal their appraisal. A copy of the signed performance appraisal is placed on the employee's file.

Employees who have been hired on contract also receive performance appraisals, as per the system outlined above.

### **Benefits Administration and Claims Management**

The entire benefits administration process is completed by Human Resources, which includes enrolling employees on benefits, processing status and beneficiary changes, terminating employees from benefits, answering employee benefit questions, creating invoices monthly and performing a monthly reconciliation between the bills provided by our benefit carriers and the amount of deductions from payroll.

The cost of benefit premiums increase each year, and Long Term Disability, Extended Health and Dental premiums are typically particularly costly. In 2007, Long Term Disability rates

increased by 10% and Extended Health rates increased by 12%. However this year there were no increases to Dental and Life/AD&D rates.

There are many employees who have a disability that prevents them from being able to work due to a variety of health conditions. Regular unionized and non-contract employees who are unable to work are eligible to apply for Long Term Disability benefits. Human Resources facilitates the process of filing for Long Term Disability. In the last fiscal year there were 20 employees who were receiving Long Term Disability benefits. This is a small decrease from the 21 employees who were receiving LTD benefits in 2006. Throughout the entire healthcare industry, Long Term Disability claims are increasing. Human Resources, Department Directors/Managers, and the Unions, work with the rehabilitation department of Healthcare Benefit Trust to proactively reintegrate employees back into the workplace through gradual return to work plans. An Early Intervention Program was negotiated into the provincial healthcare collective agreement for 2006-2010. The EIP plan was implemented this year. This collaborative program to assist regular employees who are ill or injured return to work is a joint effort between the employee, employer, the union, healthcare providers and case managers. The hope is that with appropriate case management and early assistance for employees that are ill, that LTD costs will be reduced. 20 employees on sick leave were referred to the EIP Program during the course of the year.

### **Attendance Enhancement Program and Wellness**

An Attendance Enhancement Program has been developed at GVCSS in order to reduce the amount of sick time taken by employees, in an effort to improve continuity of client care, minimize service and operational disruptions and to reduce costs associated with sick time. This year the program was revised and new guidelines were created to ensure the continued success of the program. Instead of monitoring sick time stats every six months, they are now reviewed quarterly. Employees who have high sick time have a meeting with their Supervisor or Department Director/Manager to discuss reasons for the absenteeism and potential strategies for improvement. The Union and Human Resources are involved when there have been multiple meetings with an employee,

as this program is progressive, and employees with consistently high absenteeism without bona fide reason may be subject to non-culpable termination. In the last year, from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008, there were 105 meetings held with employees who utilized an amount of sick time that was above the Agency average.

Employees who have made many efforts to attend work on a regular and consistent basis, have been recognized for their excellent

attendance through an annual recognition program. This year a GVCSS thermal travel mug and thank you memo was presented to 102 employees who had strong attendance records of less than 4 sick days in the year, an increase of 12 people from last year.

For a complete listing of the number of attendance meetings and number of employees recognized by department, see below.

**Meetings - April 1, 2007 – March 31, 2008**

<b>Department</b>	<b># of Meetings</b>
Administration	1
Home Support Administration	1
Home Support	47
Community Living	16
Richmond HandyDART	3
Simon Fraser HandyDART	37

**Total Meetings: 162**

**Annual Recognition - 2007**

<b>Department</b>	<b># of Employees Recognized</b>
Administration	6
Home Support Administration	5
Home Support	57
Community Living	14
Richmond HandyDART	9
Simon Fraser HandyDART	11

**Total Recognition: 102**

In an effort to assist GVCSS employees maintain a healthy lifestyle in terms of mind, body and soul, Human Resources has arranged in-services on a variety of health and wellness topics. In-services are run in the evening, and all employees are invited to attend. The feedback from staff regarding these in-services has been very positive and there are approximately 10-15 employees in attendance for each session. Examples of in-service topics that were held this year include a Depression in-service with a representative from the Mood Disorders Association of BC and a Massage Therapy in-service explaining the health benefits of professional therapeutic massage.

**Volunteers/Practicum Students**

Recruitment and management of practicum students is the responsibility of the Department Director. Human Resources provides a letter at the outset of the practicum outlining the terms of the employment relationship, and also maintains required documentation in a practicum file. Practicum students are referred to GVCSS from the colleges in which they attend. This year we had a couple of practicum students in both the Community Living and Home Support programs.

In the past year, there have been no volunteers working at GVCSS.

**Record Keeping**

Employee and benefit files are maintained by the HR team and are kept secure under lock and key. Only Human Resources and program Directors/Managers, or their designates, have access to these files. Personnel information is also stored on-line on the Employee Management Information System. This facilitates the efficient use and retrieval of personnel and benefit information.

**Human Resource Goals and Responsibilities**

As a result of the gathering of information for this report, and through collaborative discussions with senior management, supervisors and staff, several goals and objectives have been developed to improve the Human Resources performance within the agency. This has culminated in an HR Plan for 2007/2008.

**HUMAN RESOURCES PLAN - 2007/2008**

**Recruitment**

- Develop an external vacancy request form
- Develop an internal vacancy request form
- Create a manual with best responses to interview questions
- Develop formalized 2<sup>nd</sup> interview guides for HandyDART office positions
- Design an incentive system that rewards employees for referring candidates to our Agency for hire

**Recognition and Retention**

- Develop a peer recognition program
- Annual GVCSS open house in recognition of all Community Living staff and clients - sandwiches, snacks, draw prizes
- Develop an exit interview report for senior management to support continuous improvement in employee satisfaction

**Orientation**

- Design a mentorship program where new employees are assigned to a senior employee as a mentor

**Labour Relations**

- Negotiate a new contract with HandyDART employees should GVCSS be the successful proponent