

Vancouver branch: Embracing change to improve customer care



There's a lot happening these days at Bayshore Home Health's branch in Vancouver. "This branch has been all about change for the past year," says Chris Clark, Area Director, who joined the team about a year ago. "We've had a new Area Director, two new Managers of Clinical Practice, a move to a new location, a database migration and even the 2010 Olympics, which affected our daily work patterns and traffic routes."

Bayshore acquired the branch in 1994. Today, it serves British Columbians in the Greater Vancouver Area, including Richmond, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, Coquitlam, Maple Ridge and other communities. It also provides nursing in remote northern areas.

The branch has eight administrative staff members and 160 field staff. It offers nursing, home support and personal care, and it specializes in wound care. Most of its business comes from private-pay clients, many of whom are referred by WorkSafeBC, the province's workers' compensation board, and the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC), a Crown corporation that provides universal auto insurance to B.C. motorists.

"We're a private branch and we offer boutique service," says Clark, who has extensive experience in the hospitality industry. "Clients and staff should feel like the most important person when we're dealing with them. It means removing ourselves from systems and procedures and focusing on people and the experience. It's a personalized, service-based mentality: 'How can we adjust to meet your needs? How can we serve you?'"

Bayshore's comprehensive services and wealth of resources help it stand out in B.C.'s competitive home care field. Clark points out that Bayshore offers diversified services, including clinical support and a specialty pharmacy, while competing agencies tend to focus exclusively on one area, such as auto insurance or private care. "Our branch runs right across the spectrum. We work with people at all levels of recovery, and we're there for them from the beginning to end of care. We also work closely with the Burnaby branch, so there's a smooth transition for patients from government-funded care to private

care," explains Clark. "Our team also interacts with clients with empathy and understanding. There is a pronounced difference in the connection we make with our clients."

The branch's new location is a street-front office in the heart of Vancouver, which it moved into last fall. "It's been nice because of the higher profile presence. People drop by and the public is more aware of us now. We're putting roots into the community," says Clark.

The branch holds health clinics at pharmacies and wellness fairs to raise awareness of its many services. Clark especially hopes to inform the public about the company's free funding investigations for health care services. "It's something we're looking to promote out here. People become lost in the system – nobody really worries about health care until they need it. We help people explore their funding options."

On May 30, staff and their families will take part in the Hike for Hospice to raise funds for the Vancouver Hospice Society, which the branch actively supports and promotes. Staff members also participate in the Alzheimer's Society Walk for Memories and support the Canadian Cancer Society daffodil campaign. The branch sponsors events such as the BC Hospice Palliative Care Conference and the WorkSafeBC Health Care Professional Conference.

Clark plans to increase community awareness of the branch through local media and speaking engagements. He is exploring new opportunities, such as greater collaboration with the Vancouver Hospice Society and relationships with municipal organizations.

Clark is excited about what the future holds for his branch. "We're a tightly knit group with a very warm approach. In the past year, the branch has gone through an enormous amount of change, and that's helped build a stronger team. Everyone has been receptive and open-minded. We pulled together and supported each other."

For more information, please contact cclark@bayshore.ca

Back Row, left to right:
Chris Clark, Lorene Carey,
Barb Rogers. Front row,
left to right: Lorraine
Brackpool, Verna Palmer,
Anna Lee, Anju Bunwait.
Missing: Kam Sidhu



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