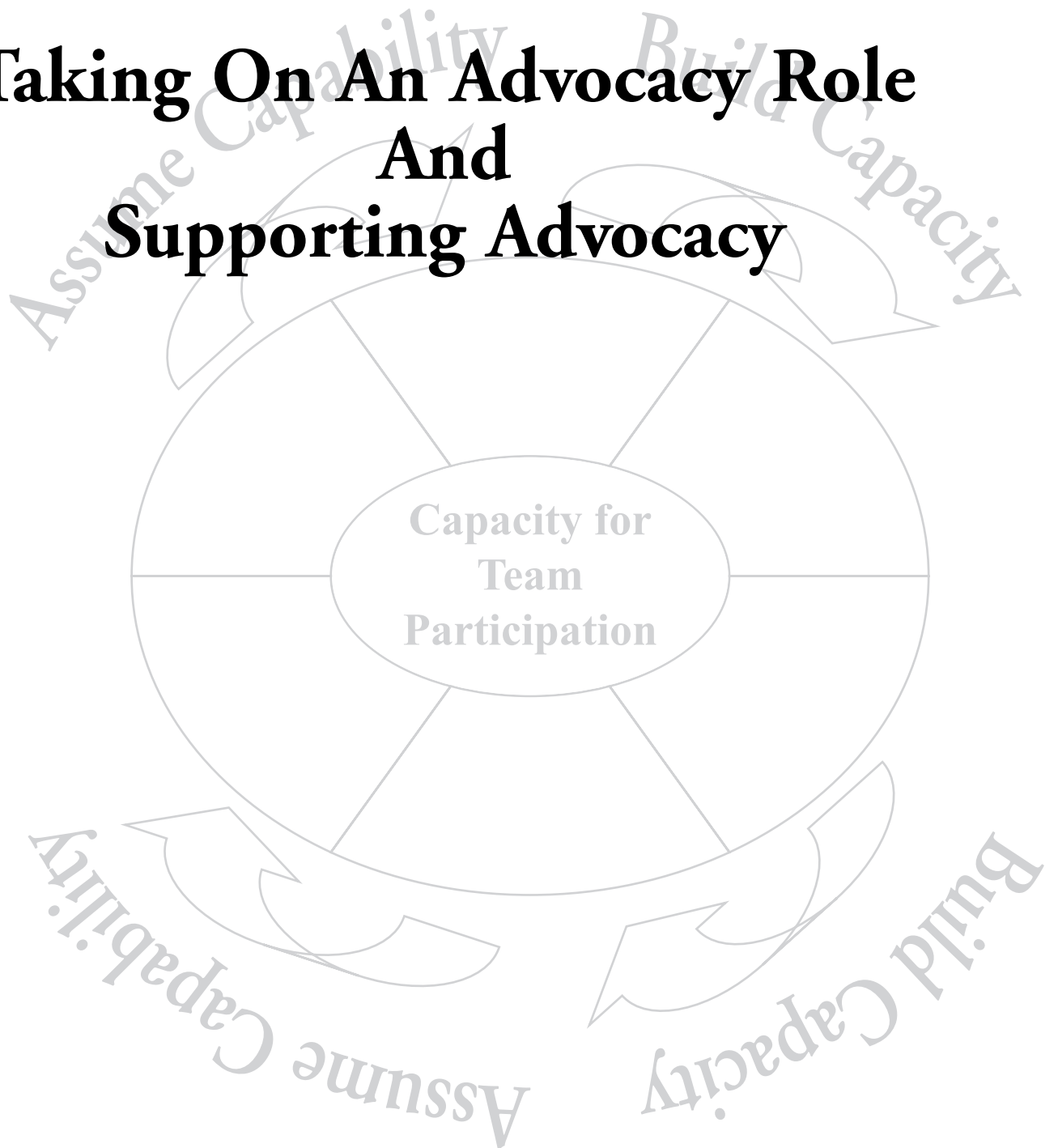
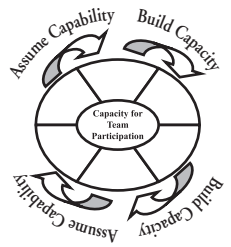


PART SEVEN:

Taking On An Advocacy Role And Supporting Advocacy





TAKING ON AN ADVOCACY ROLE AND SUPPORTING ADVOCACY

Summary of Advocacy Related Activities

Community Response Networks have taken on an advocacy role by playing a critical role in:

- ▶▶ identifying issues of concern and acting upon them; e.g. safer housing for adults who may be vulnerable to abuse
- ▶▶ maintaining pressure to bring selected sections of the adult guardianship legislation into force
- ▶▶ maintaining the view that some funding for CRNs is an ongoing need

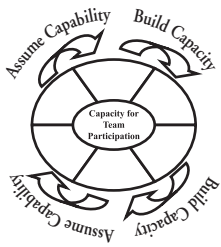
A few CRNs are supporting advocacy by:

- ▶▶ recognizing that advocacy is needed at three levels: personal support, trained advocates and legal advocates – North Okanagan
- ▶▶ educating the community on the role of advocates – Cowichan Valley
- ▶▶ providing training and support for advocates - Quesnel
- ▶▶ discussing how to develop support networks for isolated adults – Parksville/Qualicum
- ▶▶ identifying and providing information to community “champions”, e.g., agencies and businesses who will assist adults beyond what is normally expected. – North Okanagan

However, this is not an area that has been pursued as fully as other CRN activities such as outreach or education. To learn more about the important role of advocacy related to abuse and neglect, the Abuse, Neglect and Self-Neglect Planning Group suggested that the Public Guardian and Trustee of BC fund Support and Assistance Demonstration Projects.

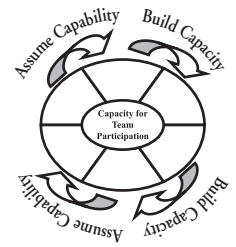
Support and Assistance Demonstration Projects

The Public Guardian and Trustee of BC issued a Request for Proposals to all CRNs in BC and a task group, made up of Planning Group members, was formed to select and oversee four projects. Those who volunteered to be part of the task group were people passionate and well informed about advocacy issues.



The response from CRNs around the province was very exciting, in spite of the limited funds available, with twenty-five submissions being made. They were all interesting, innovative and addressed advocacy issues in a variety of ways. After much discussion and deliberation, four projects were selected for funding. These four were chosen for their creativity, their links to the community at large, their distinctiveness from each other, their geographic diversity and their potential to be useful to others in the province.





Delta: Community Awareness and Education Project

Contact Person: Jim Poole
604 - 594 – 3455 (phone)
604 - 594 – 3496 fax)

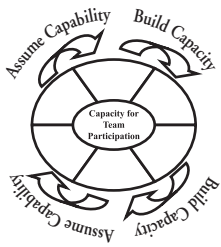
Delta's project was sponsored by Deltassist Family and Community Services Society, the workplace of Jim Poole, Chair of Delta's CRN. Delta is made up of the communities of North Delta, Ladner and Tsawwassen.

The Project

Delta's project was designed to enhance community awareness about issues of adult abuse, neglect and self-neglect. To accomplish their goal, they decided to poll members of the community and to hold workshops that would help people to respond to situations they might encounter. The project was aimed at services one might traditionally think of, such as mental health, social services etc, but also at non-traditional community partners such as businesses and financial institutions.

A project coordinator, Leila Dodd, was hired and information was solicited from the community to determine the level of interest and knowledge that people had about issues of abuse, neglect and self-neglect. Those polled were also asked to provide input regarding potential workshops: what information did people want? When should the workshops take place? (e.g. weekend vs. weekday, evening vs. daytime). How long should they be?

Leila went to beauty salons, barbers, taxi companies, bingo centres, cleaning services, postal carriers, pharmacies, transit operators, liquor stores, gardening services, optical dispensing services, medical equipment retail and rental, church groups, grocery stores, financial services, public libraries, laundry services and the Chamber of Commerce. Financial institutions, as well as service providers who deal with issues of abuse, neglect and self-neglect were also asked to participate. Leila reported that personal contact was the most successful means of outreach.



The Workshops

Once information about what people wanted had been obtained, two workshops were designed.

The first was a training seminar for representatives of financial institutions. The video Money Matters for Seniors was shown, Charmaine Spencer spoke on her research on financial abuse, and the play The ABCs of Fraud was presented by volunteers from BC CEAS. There were thirty-one participants from financial institutions, as well as health and social service agencies, victim services and the police.

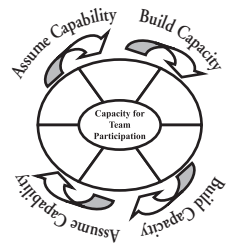
The second workshop was aimed at business people, service providers, non-profit societies and community services. “Mobilizing the Power of Prevention and Support: An Overview of the Issues.” was the focus of the day, with another presentation of The ABCs of Fraud. Fourteen people, primarily from health and victim services attended.

Outcomes of the Workshops

Although workshop evaluations were very positive and those attending felt they had got what they wanted, Leila felt that attendance by the business sector was low. Based on the information gathered initially, she had hoped for more participation. However, people identified things like cost of replacement staff and lack of time as barriers to their attendance.

In her review, she suggests that new strategies need to be developed to attract greater numbers of business people.

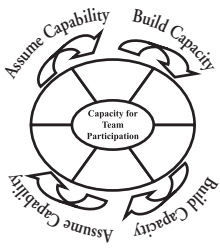
Because of the outreach and publicity done, Delta Cablevision, a local community television station, heard about the workshops and taped parts of both, to be aired from time to time. As well, they taped a round table discussion about issues of abuse, neglect and self-neglect. Participants were Alison Leaney, Pearl McKenzie and Linda Bell, of Delta Home Support, with Leila as facilitator.



Given the scope of the initial survey, attendance at the workshops and the televised presentations, many people in the Delta area have been made more aware of the issues of abuse, neglect and self-neglect, and what they can do to assist someone in need. If one person acts on that awareness, then the seeds of advocacy have germinated.

Delta's Resource Materials

See **Part Eight: Community Stories - Delta**



Quesnel: An Effective Advocacy Network

Contact Person: Helen Kuhn
250-992-5330 (phone)
250-992-4152 (fax)

The Project

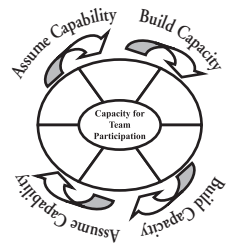
The Support and Assistance Project in Quesnel was the result of the CRN building on an activity it had already begun. An advocacy training project had already been discussed by members when the Request for Proposals arrived from the Public Guardian and Trustee.

Steering Committee members wanted to ensure that any network created by the training could be self-sustaining and the funding available was a great opportunity to do that. It was decided that their original plan would be expanded to incorporate a “Train-the-Trainer” aspect, so that trained advocates would become a renewable resource in the community.

CRN members met and set the following goals for the project:

- ▶ research, identify and obtain the resources necessary to set up a program that teaches people to train advocates.
- ▶ identify formal and informal advocates in the community.
- ▶ develop and implement a framework for advocacy training education programs.
- ▶ produce a draft pamphlet that tells people about community advocates, their roles and responsibilities and how to get assistance.
- ▶ develop an updated list of agencies, their roles and responsibilities

The work of Pat May from the Penticton Advocacy Network was known to some members, and she was contracted to provide a three day advocacy training workshop in January of 1999 and a two day advocacy leadership workshop in March 1999. It was decided that training would be offered to paid staff people, as well as volunteers, in recognition that people act as advocates within their jobs as well as outside their work. People attending the first workshop who had the skills and abilities to be trainers of others would be invited to attend the second one.



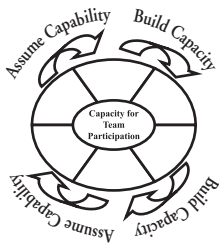
The Training Sessions

Fourteen people took the initial training session and ten of those took the subsequent two day leadership training. Each individual taking the leadership training committed to leading at least one advocacy training workshop within the next year. One member, as a practicum, volunteered to present the training to the CRN Steering Committee.

Although advocacy training has not yet taken place at the rate hoped for by the CRN Steering Committee, there have been other benefits to the networking that occurred during the workshops. Agencies are working more closely since the training, talking and working more collaboratively. The CRN has been significantly benefited by the addition of members of the aboriginal communities in and around Quesnel. Both trainers and self-advocates have been using the training in their work in the community. The project coordinator says that “As training goes on it opens people’s eyes.”.

Quesnel’s Resource Materials

Quesnel’s brochure is in the process of being updated



North Okanagan: Accessible Information and Assistance

Contact Person: Barbara Levesque
250-545-8032 (phone and fax)

The Project

In the North Okanagan the Support and Assistance Demonstration Project was a partnership between the North Okanagan Guardianship Project, the Seniors Information and Resource Bureau, the Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan, the Kindale Developmental Association and the Independent Living Resource Centre.

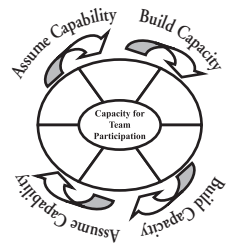
The vision of this group was to create a brochure which adapted print information about adult abuse, neglect and self-neglect into a format which would meet the needs of all adults living with a cognitive or visual impairment. The method used would build on a communication system called “PIC Symbolics”, which uses pictures instead of words to illustrate concepts, people, places and processes. It was also intended that the project be designed so that other communities could adapt the brochure for their own use.

The Development of the PIC Symbolics Brochure

A working group was formed including an Administrative Assistant and a Speech Pathologist/Communications Specialist from Kindale, the directors of the Seniors Bureau and the Independent Living Centre, a graphic artist who had worked on similar projects, and a coordinator who was a long time CRN member.

The first draft of the brochure proved to be too cluttered and was difficult to read or understand. The project was reviewed and it was decided to focus the brochure toward people who had some limited vision, people with developmental disabilities and seniors with early stage dementia.

Once the revision had been agreed upon, it was time to determine the exact content of the brochure. The group wanted to describe abuse, neglect and self-neglect in a simple, straightforward manner, and then describe actions leading to solutions. What words, feelings and ideas best describe abuse, neglect and self-neglect? Which of these words, feelings and ideas are most easily and universally understood?



It was agreed that the basic messages are:

- ▶▶ abuse and neglect are wrong
- ▶▶ you don't deserve to be treated badly
- ▶▶ you can do something to help yourself

Once a brochure had been drafted and approved by the group, feedback was sought from a variety of people from the populations for whom it had been designed. In order to achieve consensus, which was considered very important by the team, a number of subsequent drafts were needed.

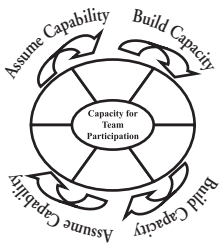
Preparing the Brochure for Sharing With Other CRNs

The final stage of the project was the development of the final design and instructions for its adaptation by others, using Adobe Pagemaker or Microsoft Publisher. It was also determined, through trial and error, that yellow paper was the best colour to use when the brochure was printed.

What was originally thought to be a relatively quick process became a much longer one, but the working group and CRN agree that the time taken to validate the content and appearance of the brochure was time well spent.

The North Okanagan's Resources

See the provincial CRN website at www.bccrn.ca



Comox Valley: An Advocacy Model for People in Residential Care

Contact Person: Janell Ward
250 – 334 – 1989 (phone)

The CRN in the Comox Valley submitted their project proposal at the suggestion of one of their members who was on the board of the Senior Peer Counselling Program, the Caregivers Association, as well as working as an administrator of a residential care facility. Her understanding of the need for advocacy and her vision for an advocacy model was quickly embraced by the group.

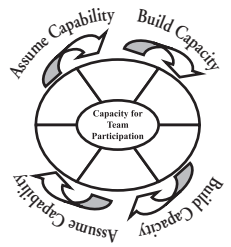
Although many people living in a facility have loving family and friends, she saw the inequity when people without anyone in their lives, who might have a greater need for an advocate, got little or no support.

The Comox Valley CRN wanted to look at the:

- ▶ qualities of a “good” advocate
- ▶ kind of assistance that was needed by residents in care
- ▶ barriers that might exist for the advocate and the facility, and
- ▶ ways advocates and facility staff can work together to benefit the people in care.

The purpose of the project was to develop guidelines for building partnerships so that people served by the Adult Guardianship Legislation get the support and assistance they need, when they need it.

It was decided that the project would focus on developing a model of advocacy, documenting people’s stories to illustrate the need for advocacy, developing guidelines based on the information gathered and encouraging community members to become involved in advocating for those living in residential care.



The project coordinator conducted numerous interviews with staff of care facilities, community advocates, a Senior Peer Counsellor and others. The following is an outline of the questions asked:

- ▶▶ What motivates people to become advocates?
- ▶▶ Who are they?
- ▶▶ What kinds of assistance are they providing now?
- ▶▶ How is the resident benefiting?
- ▶▶ What would be some guidelines for advocates and facilities that would help them to work together on behalf of the resident?
- ▶▶ Where can volunteers be found?
- ▶▶ What qualities and/or characteristics should advocates have?

Based on the information collected, a model was developed which would use the Comox Valley Senior Peer Counselling Program as a template. The coordinator concluded that if this program were supported to expand its current mandate, it could fulfil the need in the community for advocates to assist those living in residential care.

The Comox Valley's Resources

See **Part Eight: Community Stories – Comox Valley**