

WHEELS FOR WELLNESS ENHANCEMENT PROJECT – WEST COAST COMMUNITIES

BACKGROUND

Residents of the eight communities located on far west coast of the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District experience significant barriers to accessing medical care within and outside of the region in the absence of personal vehicles. Current bus routes in the coastal communities do not allow for same day travel between communities or out of the region outside of peak tourism season. There is no simple solution to address this multifaceted issue; it is evident that solutions will require partnerships and collaboration. Through consultation and planning, local community partners have been working to identify and pursue opportunities which will assist in improving conditions.

OPPORTUNITY: WEST COAST WHEELS FOR WELLNESS SERVICE

Wheels for Wellness is a program which transports non-emergency ambulatory patients to their medical appointments in excess of 60 km one way from their home. Established in 1997 the program offers door to door service operated by highly skilled volunteers complete with centralized trip coordination staff located in the Comox Valley. The program has been successful in expanding operations throughout Vancouver Island communities, offering service in the Alberni Valley for a number of years.

PHASE ONE: PILOT PROJECT

The opportunity to pilot the Wheels for Wellness program on the west coast was brought forward fall 2015. The pilot will expedite the recruitment of volunteer drivers, provide preliminary ridership data and allow communities to be better connected to appointments within the Alberni Valley and beyond.


- Pilot project from 1 Jan 2016 to 1 Apr 2016
- No cost to the communities, funded through the Wheels for Wellness “Special Projects Fund”
- Identify a need for continued service
- Wheels for Wellness will provide daily service to Port Alberni/Nanaimo as required
- This service will interlock with the current Wheels for Wellness service on Vancouver Island

PHASE TWO: PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

In order to provide sustained and seamless service to west coast communities there will be a onetime \$34 000 cost to purchase a Wheels for Wellness van after the completion of the winter 2016 pilot.

PARTNER REQUEST

To support phase two of this transportation solution we are seeking up to \$5000 in support from local government and community partners towards this onetime capital cost.

 102134


Number of patients transported in 2005-2011

 22040

Number of patients transported in 2012

 19944

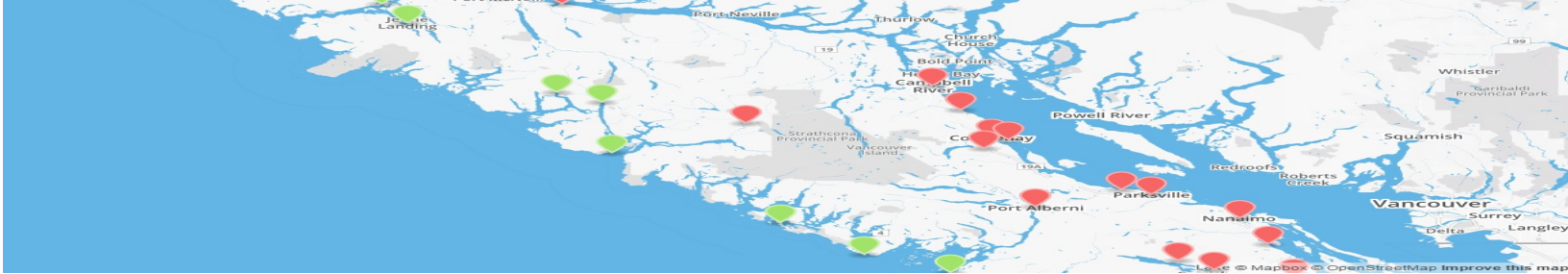
Number of patients transported in 2013

 18736

Number of patients transported in 2014

 162854

Patients transported since expansion (2005)



WHEELS FOR WELLNESS OPERATIONAL DETAILS:

Wheels for Wellness is a program which transports non-emergency ambulatory patients to their medical appointments in excess of 60 km one way from their home. The program relies on volunteer drivers whose trips are coordinated through a centralized coordination centre in Comox. This transportation network allows for same day trips to out of town appointments and increases access to health services for those who may be experiencing barriers. Once established in a community the program is able to sustain through donations and gaming grants at no further cost to the community.

More information on the Wheels for Wellness program is available on their website - <http://www.wheelsforwellness.com>. An operational breakdown for west coast community service is listed below.

Expenses			
	Capital Cost	One time - 2016 Dodge Caravan	\$34,000
	Operational Cost	Ongoing annual costs	\$42,765
Total			\$76,765

Revenues			
	Capital Cost	Communities (one time)	\$34,000
	Operational Cost	Donations and third parties	\$10,000
		BC Gaming	\$33,000
Total			\$77,000

PROJECT CONTACTS

Transportation action planning has been convened through the Alberni Clayoquot Health Network and supported by committed local partners and local governments. You can find out more about past activities at the Alberni Clayoquot Health Network webpage - <http://www.acrd.bc.ca/376> or connect with the Alberni Clayoquot Health Network Coordinator, Marcie DeWitt at achn@acrd.bc.ca.

We welcome your input, questions and participation!

102134

Number of patients transported in 2005-2011

22040

Number of patients transported in 2012

19944

Number of patients transported in 2013

18736

Number of patients transported in 2014

162854

Patients transported since expansion (2005)