

CONNECTIONS PLACE SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT

April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019



WHO ARE WE?

CONNECTIONS PLACE CLUBHOUSE

Connections Place Clubhouse helps members recover from mental illness and reclaim their lives through a supportive environment that focuses on the person's strengths and talents, rather than their illness. We create opportunities for members to return to school, gain employment, have a place to live, connect with their families, make new friends and create multiple successes. We also strive to provide mental health education to increase awareness and understanding of mental illness and mental health.

THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR FUNDER



SISTERS
OF ST. ANN
PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Continuing the Legacy

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Vision

We will be a vibrant, innovative and collaborative space dedicated to creating opportunity and purpose for those with mental health challenges. The Clubhouse will be dedicated to nurturing respect, equality and dignity for all.

Mission

To provide people whose lives have been disrupted by mental illness, the opportunity to recover meaningful and productive lives through reintegration within the workplace and the community.

These statements are in the process of being rewritten in collaboration with our membership.

Our first year of operation and the year to which the financials in this annual report refer, was dedicated to finding a location and making appropriate renovations to turn the perfect location we found, into the stunning Clubhouse that is now in operation. Rather than fill this report with details of the process of renovation and the before and afters, we thought we would instead provide insight into the first months of operation to bring us up to date as of October 2019.

EXECUTIVE REPORT: HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR FIRST YEAR

Our Grand Opening was held on February 21, 2019 with 150 people attending.

It has been five years in the making but good things take time (as they say)! The Gala dinner at Uptown in May 2017 gave us a great start raising \$100,000 and we are so grateful to for that support which started us on our way.

It's been an amazing year for Connections Place since September 2018. With the Sisters of St. Ann providing \$500,000 funding, we were able to start operations. The photos below show us celebrating at the Grand Opening In February 2019.





Staff: Janine Hartley, Georgina Patko, Sony Garza, Louise Baert

Doors opened to members on March 4, 2019 and we are proud to report that there are 85 members at the time of writing, we are honoured by the partnerships we've created throughout the City of Victoria which have provided so many referrals. Many of our members have arrived through word of mouth as well, and it is becoming familiar to hear feedback that Connections Place is meeting the needs of the people living in our community.

THE CLUBHOUSE WORKS!

Every day starts at 9:00 with an all-unit meeting at 10:00. Members and staff together, plan the work-ordered day ahead.



KITCHEN UNIT

Our new kitchen was completed just a few hours before the Grand Opening! It is open, bright and welcoming. The design team created a beautiful space for members to work side-by-side with staff in a motivating environment. There is always something to clean and maintain, which creates great work opportunities.

The freezer and two fridges were donated to us and members assembled some terrific stainless steel shelving for our pantry.

Staff and members work together to plan, grocery shop and make healthy and delicious meals. Presently we serve lunch Monday – Thursday, however as we grow, our vision is to be open 7 days a week, 365 days a year, serving 3 meals a day.

We have served 610 lunches so far this year (April – September). Members and staff work together planning menus, cooking, serving and cleaning. Our food program not only provides healthy meals but also provides opportunities for people to learn and/or teach cooking and various kitchen skills. Thanks to the donation of two bread-making machines we are also able to produce our own breads and rolls.



Wellness Program

Many days begin with a 10-minute meditation ably assisted by YouTube videos. Our lunchtime walk with staff at lunchtime has been very well attended during the summer months especially. We plan to increase the program by introducing 'sit and be fit' and 'smoking cessation' sessions as volunteers step up to help.

A wonderful healthy activity for members who like to garden, is our gardening program, which is just beginning. With many thanks to the support of one of our members who has an incredible community garden, he welcomes our members to garden with him and they bring back plenty of wonderful fresh produce and herbs for us to use in our kitchen program. It is truly wonderful to be able to pick fresh lettuce out in the sunshine and then eat it within minutes as part of a delicious salad back at the clubhouse!



CLERICAL UNIT

Our retail store welcomed the first customer recently. Members selected the inventory from items they would most like to purchase and we are able now to provide them with their choices at cost price. Female sanitary products are provided free of charge.



Our Administration program is developing too. We are fortunate to have received computers and IT support from CPG Systems since we opened our doors. Our first internal newsletter was printed and members have formed a writing group to develop future newsletters directed to members and to our supporters.

Our members contribute to all the admin work required to operate. From reception duties and giving tours, to inputting data and making signage, we are grateful for their skills and abilities in supporting the clubhouse.



Clerical tasks also include answering phone calls, covering the front desk, typing, filing, shredding and collating. Members also provide tours of the clubhouse for potential members, service providers and community members.

There has been significant interest in the clubhouse and from our opening to Sept. 15, there have been **235** tours (139 Members and 96 Agencies). Members record both tour and member attendance.

Attendance to date (September 15) has been 888. We have received 139 applications in total and have 93 active members.

Outreach is how we keep in touch with our members. We contact members who haven't been attending, send birthday cards and get-well cards when required and which are all made at the clubhouse. We also contact those who have applied and not completed the process. As we grow, we will expand the outreach program to include visits to the hospital if one of our members is unwell.

AWARENESS BUILDING

This year, we were proud to be able to participate as an operating clubhouse at the Defeat Depression Run, Quadra Days and The Victoria Day Parade. Members and staff together were actively engaged in all the preparation, volunteerism and joy from being a part of something so much bigger in educating the public about mental illness and help dispel stigma.



Defeat Depression Run



Quadra Days



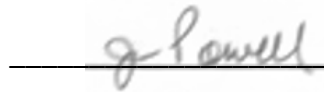
Victoria Day Parade

LATEST NEWS

In September, Executive Director, Georgina Patko, who established the look and feel of the clubhouse, will be retiring as planned. We can't thank Georgina enough for the hard work, persistence and vision that have brought us to this point.

Peter Fitzpatrick, our new ED brings many skills to the table and we look forward to working together to expand and grow into a very bright future.

There are many businesses and individuals who have pulled together to get us on our feet. They have come together to make our vision a reality. With continued support, we will expand our hours of operation, start our employment program, and continue to flourish.



Jackie Powell, Board Chair



Georgina Patko, Executive Director

Clubhouse Members Testimonials

"Connections Place has had a very positive impact on my life-My Mental Wellness...."

Michelle

"With Connections Place I am now having a summer of love. I am meeting new friends and have new purpose. I enjoy connecting with other clubhouses, engaging in new relationships and I am grateful for the supportive staff members..."

B.B.

"I used to have to be hospitalized at least once or twice a month. Since coming to Connections Place over 6 months ago I have not been back to the hospital at all. I love coming here and being part of the team...."

D.



Thank you to our donors:

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 Alex Ashby
 BabyTel
 Marilyn Ball
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DIRECTORS

Chair	Jackie Powell
Vice Chair	Andrea Paquette
Treasurer	Andrea Paquette (acting)
Secretary	Cherry Lynn Brown
Directors	Alex Ashby, Trevor Dyck, Sandy McManus, Jill Moores, Paul Reshaur, Jeany Shipley.

STAFF

Executive Director	Georgina Patko (retired)/Peter Fitzpatrick
Program Staff	Louise Baert, Sonia 'Sony' Garza, Janine Hartley

CLUBHOUSE GUARANTEE

A place to come
A right to meaningful work
A right to meaningful relationships
A right to a place to return

