

Vancouver Disability Solutions Network

Resource List for Assisting Newcomers with Disabilities

GENERAL RESOURCES

Accessibility for Newcomers Program

The Accessibility for Newcomers program, created by MOSAIC, connects immigrants and refugees with disabilities to employment and disability support services. The program's Referral Specialist provides needs assessments and referrals to settlement and disability services. The goal of the program is to provide a bridge between settlement services and disability services. Here is the link: <https://mosaicbc.org/our-programs/support-for-newcomers-with-disabilities/>. For more information, send an email to accessibility@mosaicbc.org.

BC 211

BC211, now part of United Way, is an online directory and information and referral hotline/text/email/webchat that directs people to community and government services. Translation is now available in over 150 languages. Here is the link: <https://bc.211.ca/>. For more information about BC211, please contact Genny Krikorian, Community Engagement Coordinator at gennyk@uwbc.ca.

Support Workers for People with Disabilities

The NWD Forum frequently brought up the shortage of support workers serving people with disabilities. Support Worker Central is a unique platform and free employment website connecting individuals with disabilities and support workers throughout British Columbia. A collaboration between [Family Support Institute of BC](#) and [Vela Canada](#), Support Worker Central is established specifically for individuals with disabilities (and their families), who receive government funding to hire their own support staff; and potential support staff looking for their next job supporting someone with a disability. Here is the link: <https://www.supportworkercentral.ca/>.

Access to Immigrant Settlement Services for Immigrants with Disabilities

Handouts for Sector Employees Immigrant Settlement Services. Link: <https://ocasi.org/sites/default/files/ocasi-handouts-sector-employees.pdf>

Guide for Assessing Persons with Disabilities

How to determine and implement assessment accommodations, developed by Public Service Commission of Canada. Link: <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/canada/public-service-commission/migration/plcy-pltq/guides/assessment-evaluation/apwd-eph/pdf/apwd-eph-eng.pdf>

How to create an accessibility plan and policy

Find step-by-step instructions and templates to help prepare accessibility policies and a multi-year plan as required under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

Includes an excellent section on Common Barriers and Solutions. Link:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-create-accessibility-plan-and-policy#section-4>

VOLUNTEERS AND PEER SUPPORT

iVolunteer

Mobilizing volunteers to support newcomers with disabilities came up in the NWD Forum discussion. United Way has access to a network of volunteers through its iVolunteer platform. Here is the link: <https://www.ivolunteer.ca/>. For more information about iVolunteer, please contact Aubrey Mendoza, Volunteer Coordinator, Non-Profit Sector at aubreym@uwbc.ca.

Go Volunteer

Offers a Volunteer Connector portal to search or post volunteer opportunities. Also offers resources for both volunteers and organizations, including Volunteer Administration Online Training, Volunteer Centre Listings, Volunteer BC Handbooks and Volunteer Engagement Resources. Here is the link: <https://govolunteer.ca/>

Hi Neighbour

Hi Neighbour Peer-led support groups were mentioned as a need at the NWD Forum. United Way's Hi Neighbour Initiative, which brings individuals within neighbourhoods together to mobilize around different needs, could play a role. Local Love grants of up to \$1000 are available for individuals that have ideas to make their communities better. To apply for a Local Love microgrant, here is the link: <https://uwbc.ca/local-love-fund-application/>

United Way has Community Builder staff to support in the following neighbourhoods:

- Sunset
- Edmonds
- North Delta
- Willoughby
- Hammond
- Cedar Valley Babich / Mill Lake
- Sardis
- Central Squamish
- South Coquitlam

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health First Aid – useful training for settlement workers:

- the help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis
- just like physical first aid, it is provided until medical treatment can be obtained, appropriate support is found or the crisis is resolved
- doesn't turn you into a clinical counselor but teaches you how to communicate with the client, ask questions without overwhelming or offending them, offer to make an appointment or provide resources, approach sensitive issues, what questions to ask
- offered in public sessions by the Canadian Mental Health Association
- sessions can also be brought to your community or workplace

Other mental health-related courses offered by CMHA:

- BounceBack
- Living Life to the Full
- Advancing Resilience

Other mental health resources

- Pathways Serious Mental Illness Society: offers training for families and friend groups regarding how to best help a loved one who is struggling. Website: <https://pathwayssmi.org/>
- Venture: a short-term crisis intervention facility located just off Main Street and 13th Avenue (can be a less traumatic alternative to hospitalization)
- Drop-in Centres: offer mental health drop-in programs with opportunities for peer support, socializing, education, job search, meals and creative expression
 - Coast Mental Health
 - Motivation, Power & Achievement (MPA) Society
 - Kettle Society

ONLINE ACCESSIBILITY

WebAIM

Reviews the top 1 million websites each year and finds 96.8% of home pages have accessibility issues. <https://webaim.org/projects/million/>

Web content accessibility guidelines

<https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/glance/>