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Chimo Community Services Seniors Rent Bank Initiative

Chimo Community Services Society has long provided a variety of services to individuals and families in the Richmond Community, many of whom are seniors. Our Outreach & Advocacy and Homeless Prevention Programs often work with seniors with housing needs, some of whom may be homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness. In our Outreach & Advocacy Program, 27% of new clients in 2014 were aged 55 and older. Since its inception in August 2014, 21% of the individuals served by our Homeless Prevention Program were aged 55 and older. Recognizing this, and with the generous donation of \$2,000 from the Dream Auction, Chimo Community Services Society hopes to create a Seniors Rent Bank, a first of its kind in Richmond.

The Seniors Rent Bank will provide short term funding to seniors that live in the City of Richmond, to enable them to secure or maintain their housing. The funding may go towards unpaid rent or utilities to prevent eviction, or may go towards a security deposit or pet deposit to enable a senior to secure housing. The short term funding would be provided in the form of an interest-free loan from our organization, giving seniors who may not have access to existing Provincial supplements, the opportunity for a home. Funding would be used exclusively for housing-related costs, and specific eligibility criteria and requirements for supporting documentation, would apply.

We sincerely hope that our new initiative will fill a need in our community for a rent bank, to prevent seniors who have nowhere else to go from becoming homeless and entering the cycle of poverty; as well, to create opportunity for future programs and funding. Should you have any questions regarding our new initiative, please do not hesitate to contact Alysia Woelbern at T. 604-279-7170 or E. AWoelbern@chimoservices.com.

Regards,

Diane Sugars
Executive Director

Alysia Woelbern
Outreach Worker