



Health & Home
CARE
Society of BC

This year **CARE BC** is celebrating **125 Years of Service in British Columbia**

In 1898, the **Health and Home Care Society of BC (Care BC)** was one of the founding branches of the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON). When VON Canada restructured as a national entity in 2006, Care BC opted to become an independent organization, and adopted its current name at that time.



The VON was founded in 1898 by Lady Aberdeen, the wife of Canada's Governor General of Canada, in recognition of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and in response to a resolution passed by the National Council of Women. The resolution identified the urgent need for visiting nursing services in remote areas of Canada where medical services were sparse. VON branches were opened in Halifax, Montreal, Kingston, Toronto, and Vancouver.

That same year, an expedition by 4 VON nurses during the Klondike Gold Rush brought early notoriety to the organization. Contemporary newspaper accounts described these brave women "leaping, springing and climbing over sharp and jagged rocks, a strain that only the strongest and most sinewy woman could bear". Upon reaching Dawson, the nurses cared for many victims of a serious typhoid epidemic.

Between 1898 and 1952, 8 additional branches were opened in BC providing nursing and home support services: Victoria, Burnaby, North Vancouver, Surrey, West Vancouver, Trail, Richmond, and Nanaimo. VON nurses opened cottage hospitals along the coast, provided care to remote northern communities and helped meet the needs of families unable to afford healthcare. Supported by donations and small government grants, these nurses also pioneered prenatal education, delivered babies, offered new mothers' education and well-baby clinics, established school health services, collected clothing and supplies for young families, and provided nursing care to the underprivileged.

With the introduction of universal health insurance in Saskatchewan in 1964, it became evident that the role of VON nurses would change. Medicare became a national reality in 1968 and funding for provincial health services changed significantly.

In 1976, the BC government decided that nursing and physiotherapy services provided by the VON would be managed by public health staff. Some of the VON branches that could no longer afford to provide nursing services, without financial support from the government, closed. The VON Richmond Vancouver Branch, which was incorporated in 1971, continued, and in 1998, changed its name to VON BC. In 2006, VON BC chose to become independent of VON Canada, and adopted its current name (Care BC).



Care BC focusses on providing preventive and supportive health and social services, which keep people as healthy as possible, and living in the comfort of their homes and communities for as long as they choose. While the programming and services offered have evolved, this organization's commitment to the health and well-being of British Columbians has never wavered throughout its 125-year history. This tradition of caring continues to this day and is exemplified by the **Meals on Wheels Programs** (Western and Chinese), the **Family Respite Centre** (Adult Day and Overnight Program) and the **Community Integration Project**. Fundraising is one of the fundamental ways Care BC ensures resources are in place to continue operating these programs well into the future.

Warmest regards,

Inge Schamborzki, D.Ed. | Care BC Executive Director

Donate online:

www.carebcfoundation.ca/donate-now

125th anniversary
週年 1898 - 2023

Please join us at our anniversary gala this fall - Oct 28, 2023!
Pinnacle Hotel Harbourfront | 1133 West Hastings Street, Vancouver

www.carebcfoundation.ca/gala

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