



PET OUTREACH PROGRAM

EVALUATION REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The third time I booked an in-person interview with Jesse Smith, Atira's recently hired Pet Outreach Program Coordinator, we had to rush back to the office from a local coffee shop because a volunteer for Wildlife Rescue was heading to her office to pick up an injured pigeon. Jesse found the pigeon on her way to work earlier that day and called the organization for assistance. I took my half-eaten scone and left the rest of my coffee on the table and rushed to catch up with Jesse so I could continue our conversation in her shared office in Vancouver's Gastown neighbourhood.

The Pet Outreach Program was launched by Atira Women's Resource Society in October 2021. In just five months, according to the data, the Atira Pet Outreach team provided more than 1,120 services for, primarily, supportive housing residents who needed help with their pets. This amounts to one pet served every working hour since the Program began. Almost all costs for the Program, except salaries, are paid by fundraising, grants and collecting in-kind donations. In a typical month, more than \$9,000 is spent on vet care, pet food, treats, pet supplies and vet services, including check ups, surgeries, hospitalizations, and medications.

The number of pet-related services in different buildings indicates that at least 50% of the pets in Atira buildings have used the Program in the past five months; and the number of requests is rising as word spreads among tenants and residents about the existence of the Program.

Vet care is by far the most requested service, and also the costliest. The Program has been able to secure funds to do major surgeries for six pets so far; and provided spaying, neutering and other vet-related appointments for many more. However, a special vet-care fund that was available for low-income people was recently cancelled by the BCSPCA, which has left the Program desperately in need of funding for vet-care services. Other services such as pet food, treats and pet supplies are still available through the BCSPCA and other pet welfare and rescue organizations. In addition, basic grooming, nail trimming, pet-care planning and behavior consultation are being provided by the Program Coordinator, who is currently training a recently hired pet outreach worker.

The evaluation comes to assess two of the OECD-DAC criteria for Program evaluations, relevance, and effectiveness. The six main findings of this evaluation show that the Program has been both relevant and effective – the Program has responded to a significant need within Atira Programs, and it has also been effective in that Program staff were able to provide services and respond to requests in a timely manner and with high quality. The evaluation identifies a total of nine recommendations that Atira should explore implementing, to ensure both the sustainability and expansion of the Pet Outreach Program services.

OVERVIEW

Atira Women's Resource Society launched its Pet Outreach Program in October 2021, which in five months has made more than 840 visits to supportive housing tenants, residents, and their pets. The Program started with two full-time employees, one of whom left early and another who was recently hired and is in training. The team worked out of a shared office in Gastown. The number of services provided indicates that in every single working hour since the Program started, one service has been provided for tenants or residents of Atira buildings who needed help and support with and for their pets.

The Program was launched to respond to the increasing number of pets in Atira's buildings and the increasing pressure on Atira and other non-profits to accept pets and create pet friendly buildings, which helps ensure people experiencing homelessness do not have to choose between their animals and a roof over their heads.



The Program is offered to tenants and residents of all Atira buildings including supportive housing, transitional programs, and shelters operated by Atira Property Management, Atira Women's Resource Society and Atira Development Society. The Program provides tenants and residents with pet food, kitty litter, pet supplies such as harnesses, leashes, collars, muzzles, toys, crates, beds, etc., as well as access to veterinary care, basic health care and behavioural training. If a requested item service is not available, staff work to find that item or service.

The Program gets the majority of its donations from two BCSPCA shelters (Vancouver and West Vancouver), as well as pet food donations from Long Live Cats and Dogs - [longlivecatsanddogs.com](https://www.longlivecatsanddogs.com), and from funds raised by Atira.

Since starting posters have been hung in accessible areas in all buildings. This is a popular Program and the team has been busy with calls from tenants and residents as well as from staff seeking

support for tenants and residents. The most common request is for food however, the Program also offers help with vet care.

Many different kinds of animals have been served since starting the Program; mostly cats and dogs but also rats, a few rabbits, snakes, and a bearded dragon. There have also been a few wildlife calls as Atira houses some enthusiastic animal lovers who go above and beyond to help all kinds of domestic, feral and wild beasts.

The demand to start the Pet Outreach Program came from recognizing that for some of Atira's tenants and residents, their relationship with their pet is stronger than with most people. They are with their animals 24/7 and often their animal is the only family they have. Atira believed that by starting a Program just for tenants and residents and their pets, we can contribute to tenants' and residents' mental well-being, helping them know they can take care of the pets they love, as well as ensure their pets are receiving the care and attention they deserve.

Many studies have demonstrated that pets can reduce stress, anxiety and depression, ease loneliness, encourage exercise and playfulness, and even improve cardiovascular health in people. Pets also provide valuable companionship and perhaps most importantly, pets can add real joy and unconditional love to people's lives.

There is increasing recognition of the therapeutic function pets can play in relation to mental health. A review that was conducted in 2018 by BMC Psychiatry suggests that pets provide benefits to those with mental health conditions through the intensity of connectivity with their people and the contribution they make to emotional support in times of crises, together with their ability to help manage their people's symptoms when they arise.¹ However, there has been minimal research, especially in Canada, when it comes to understanding the comprehensive role of companion animals and how pets might contribute to the work associated with managing a long-term mental health condition.

When it comes to understanding the contribution of pets to populations made vulnerable including people who are homeless, use drugs, and or women exposed to violence, Atira, as part of this evaluation, could not find research that address this area. The only document that was found comes from McCreary Centre Society, BC, Canada, where their study on the health of BC youth with pets has indicated that having a pet appeared to be linked to increased social connections, including homeless youth being more likely to have non-homeless friends, engage in physical activities and exercise, have feelings of safety, and even increasing attendance at school.²

Advocating for Animals in Canada and British Columbia

There is a long history of advocating for animals in Canada and British Columbia with two primary animal welfare organizations; the SPCA (Society for the Prevention of



¹ The power of support from companion animals for people living with mental health problems: a systematic review and narrative synthesis of the evidence, BMC Psychiatry, 2018

² Connections and Companionship: The Health of BC Youth with Pets, McCreary Centre Society

Cruelty to Animals), a worldwide organization originally founded in England in 1824, and the Humane Society.

The BCSPCA is a non-profit organization that advocates for animal protection legislation, operates animal shelters, and runs educational workshops and public awareness Programs throughout B.C. Founded in 1896, it is a registered charitable organization and one of the largest animal welfare organizations in North America. Beyond law enforcement, the Society's primary aims are to educate the public and advocate for an end to practices causing suffering for animals. As of 2017, the BCSPCA had 36 branches, more than 500 staff members, nearly 5,500 volunteers, operated five veterinary hospitals/clinics and a wildlife rehabilitation center, and sheltered more than 22,000 animals.

Humane Canada is the largest national animal welfare organization in Canada. it was founded in 1957 and represents Humane societies, SPCAs, and animal rescue organizations. Humane Canada aims to promote the welfare and humane treatment of animals and works to end animal cruelty. Vancouver Humane Society offers a specific Program called Helping Women and Pets in Crisis, which, according to a February 28th email from Amy Morrison, Vancouver Humane Society CEO, offers services to the following not-for-profit organizations; Atira Women's Resource Society, DEWC, North Shore/Sage House, VisionQuest Recovery, Joy's transition House, Lookout Society, PHS Society, , Directions Youth Services, Overdose Prevention Society, Kilala Lelum Health Centre, WISH, VRR, Paws for Hope, Surrey Cats Coalition, Ishtar Transition Society and 127 Housing Society.

"In 2022, we have already assisted 37 animals and their people. If [pets] require urgent medical assistance, we help them through the McVitie Veterinary Assistance Program, so [our services] only include preventative medicine." Vancouver Humane Society CEO.

Other organizations in BC that provide support for animals and people who have pets include the PetSmart Foundation, the UBC Animal Welfare Program, Community Veterinary Outreach, and the Animal Welfare Foundation of Canada. Despite all of the active pet-related organizations, there are not many Programs specifically designed for low-income individuals and families who need support, pet supplies, veterinary care, or care planning for their pets.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Appreciative Inquiry (sometimes shortened to "AI") is the primary approach of this evaluation. AI is principally an organizational development method that focuses on increasing what an organization does well, rather than on eliminating what it does badly. Through an inquiry which appreciates the positive and engages all levels of an organization and project stakeholders, it seeks to renew, develop, and build on strengths. Appreciative Inquiry builds upon an "asset-based approach" as it starts with the belief that every stakeholder has positive aspects that can be built upon. It asks questions like "What's working well?", "What's good about what you are currently doing?". Therefore, it avoids or minimizes the excessive focus on dysfunctions, which may affect the way a project benefits from the evaluation as the project may become worse or fail to become better.

The overall approach of the AI was designed and supported through:

- **Assessing two of the OECD-DAC criteria:** The evaluation team has assessed both criteria of relevance and effectiveness as part of this evaluation.

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Relevance measures the extent to which the intervention/ project aligns with the needs and priorities of the target population.
Effectiveness measures the extent to which an activity/ project achieves its purpose according to the plan and project objectives and/or goal.

- **Joint learning:** The evaluation focused on a joint learning process and provided sufficient time for project staff and tenants/residents to discuss and reflect on their own experiences and insights. The aim of the evaluation is to inform Atira future efforts to strengthen its Programmatic and interventions. Therefore, it was critical that staff and tenants and residents engage with the evaluation process and view this exercise as a joint learning opportunity across the project.
- **Ensure a focus on causality:** To support the understanding of lesson-learning, the evaluation focused not just on ‘what’ happened, but rather on ‘why’ it happened. This is important if the evaluation is to support scaling up or replicating successful interventions.
- **Multi-method approach combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection:** Combining structured and semi-structured questionnaires supporting key information interviews (KII) with project staff and online questionnaires (with a total of 34 tenants/residents across different Atira buildings), the review of data available in reports from Atira, and cross-checking of data from interviews with project staff and primary stakeholders.

For triangulation purposes, data gathered through direct consultation was cross-checked with Program documentation and Program staff. KIIs were semi-structured and allowed the evaluator to tap into the knowledge and learning of those most closely linked to the Pet Outreach Program.

Evaluation Limitations

The main limitation of this evaluation was the lack of a robust system to collect information on Program interventions. Summary notes and memory of the Program Coordinator was relied on to gather data for the three months, October through December 2021.

The Pet Outreach Program staff, as part of this evaluation, and to ensure a robust documentation system in place moving forward, were asked to keep detailed log notes regarding everyday operations and services.

The evaluation team, in consultation with the Program staff, designed a tracking sheet (log) that the staff started to use in January 2022 to document the Program interventions and or activities implemented daily.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1: The pet outreach Program responds to a serious and significant need for pet services in DTES area. However current Program resources do not match the high need.

Data from January 2022 shows that during the month of January a total of 116 pets were served by the Program, some on multiple occasions. Some tenants and residents also have multiple pets, and each pet was counted separately. This means that the Program staff work with five to six pets every day, which is significant when knowing that each pet might need a separate and distinct service or support than another.

100% of the tenants and residents surveyed who have pets and live at an Atira building indicated that they have used the services of the Pet Outreach Program, and indicated they have received a variety of services from the Program.

When looking at data from January, February and March 2022, we can estimate that the Program provides an average of 40 services per week, which means that since the start of the Program a total of approximately 1,120 services were conducted by the Program staff.

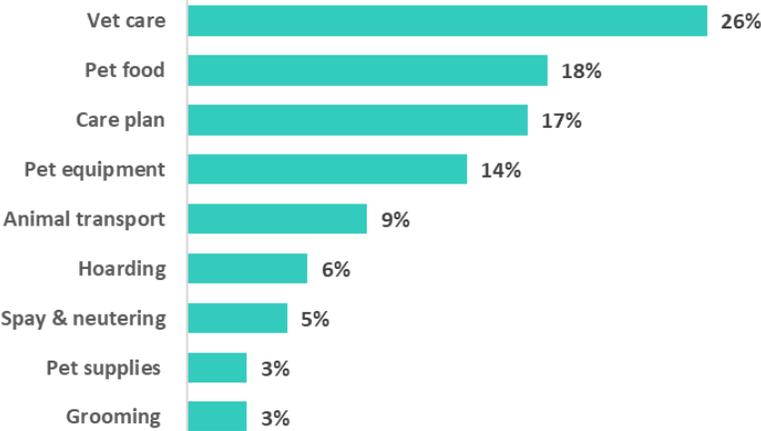
When looking at the breakdown of type of services requested, we see a variety of services including supply of pet food, basic grooming, pet supplies, spaying/neutering, general vet care, behavior advice, pet care planning, addressing animal hoarding, referrals to animal welfare organizations, and raising money and finding donations.

According to the data, most requests have been for vet care, and more than a quarter of the Program’s resources have gone to vet care services and pet-care planning, including vet visit follow-up, surgery after-care, hospitalization, and other services where the pet needs medical intervention. If we add spaying/neutering, approximately half of the Program services are dedicated to vet interventions and the other half to pet food, treats, pet supplies, behavioral advice, animal transport and addressing pet hoarding.

The data (side) has provided a clear picture of the high need and significant number of requests coming to the Program compared to the number of staffs. However, to better understand Program

“I am very thankful that my dog’s ear infection was resolved. It was a fundraising with a total of \$1800 as well as a \$400.00 donation by Atira that helped her recover. I thought that the \$400 was a loan via Atira, however, when I knew it was a gift from Atira, I was very touched and I felt supported and appreciated.”

Cheryl, an Atira resident



resources, it was important to look at the Program financials. The revision of allocated resources has indicated that during the month of January 2022 the total cost of items and services provided was \$9,677.24, from which approximately 70% was obtained through fundraising and the rest from in-kind donations provided primarily through the BCSPCA. Therefore, it is estimated that since the start of the Program and up till April 2022 a total of around \$67,000 of services has been provided through the Program.

The most pressing challenge that currently faces the Program is the BCSPCA cancelling their low-income vet assistance program. The Program Coordinator wrote to the BCSPCA's CEO Craig Daniels asking them to reconsider and shared stories of some of the pets Atira has been able to help through their program. Unfortunately, the BCSPCA is firm in its decision at this time.

This decision will significantly affect the Program resources especially vet services, which is highly needed and rated as the number one service requested by most tenants and residents within Atira.

Between October 23rd and January 25th, alone, the Program Coordinator booked 20 vet appointments for tenants and residents. The clinic that Atira has been using charges \$40.95 after taxes for an exam. This is the most efficient cost available (lowest) when looking at the available prices and the best quality of service (high) provided by the clinic and the vets. Of those 20 appointments, six took home medications ranging in cost from \$30-\$90 each.

The Program Coordinator also had to facilitate the humane euthanasia of two cats at \$420 each. They have needed to do X-rays for bladder stones and injured limbs (approximately \$240 each) and bloodwork for three animals to see if they could survive going under anesthetic (\$280 each).

A dog was taken to an emergency hospital as she wasn't surviving giving birth and would have died without intervention (costing only \$318.26 as the hospital provided a huge discount).

Another emergency surgery for a dog who was attacked by another as she was walking through the hallways of her building cost \$1,136; and a cat who somehow got stuck inside the wall at his building and was bitten by rats while he couldn't move was hospitalized for a few days to recover, costing \$1,080.34.

Another woman got her dog to the vet and was told he needed \$1,800 surgery to treat a hematoma in his ear. She thought she could maybe come up with half of the money in a few months, but the vet urged us to treat the hematoma quickly as the dog was likely in a great deal of pain. The Program Coordinator applied for funding through the Vancouver Humane Society, Community Vet Outreach, the BCSPCA's Alternative

"I was told by the BCSPCA if I'm concerned about the wellbeing of an animal and the owner isn't taking them in for medical care that we should be urging them to surrender their animal, or call an officer in. This goes against what I want to do with this Program, and against what I believe what I was hired to do. I have with each of the larger costing cases suggested surrendering the animal (knowing the medical bills would be paid in full by a shelter) but have only had one person be ok with this offer.

At our current rate, we've averaged 6.5 vet appointments per month, and I can only see this number going up as the Program grows and more people learn about the services we are offering. I'm hoping we can find funding to cover full medical bills for a minimum of four clients per month, prioritizing emergency cases."

Pet outreach project coordinator

Measure's Program, as well as secured funding from Atira for this case, which is a time-consuming process, with no guarantees of success. The application is among many that each organization receives each month.

Atira continues to build linkages with other organizations that might be able to support the Program including, for example, UBC's Community Vet Outreach Program. This program supports preventative initiatives such as spaying, neutering, vaccine, etc. While Community Vet Outreach is a useful and much needed program, it also only covers *preventative* care and not emergency services including surgeries and hospitalizations.

Recommendation 1: Atira must explore funding opportunities to respond to the high needs of pet services within its buildings to secure sufficient resources, including staffing.

Recommendation 2: Atira must design outreach materials that provide information on services provided by the Program and also other services available in the DTES.

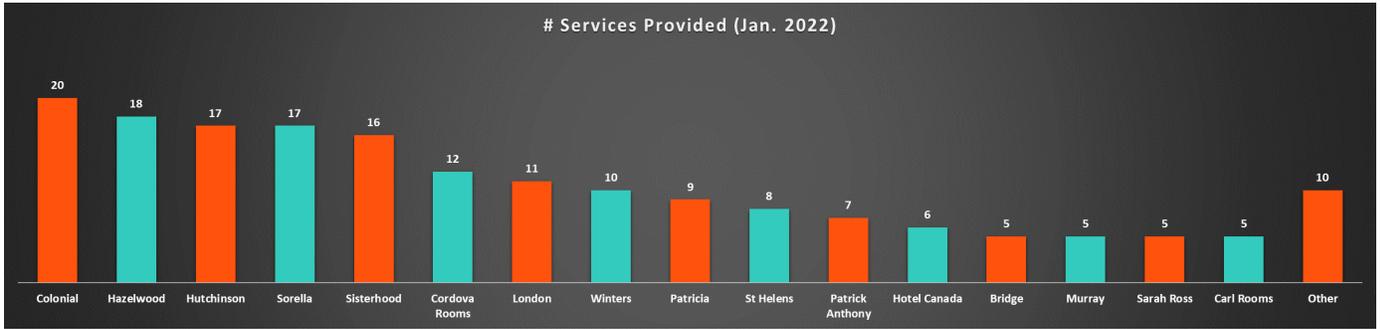
Recommendation 3: Atira must explore the possibility of establishing partnerships with local vet clinics or organizations that may be able to support by providing pro-bono services.

Finding 2: Atira's pet policy allows a high number of its tenants and residents to keep pets without restrictions. Pets and their people were distributed across all of Atira's different housing types without any constraints, and Program services were provided in all of the different housing types.

The evaluation tried to explore whether there are any specific themes by which tenants and residents would have pets or receive services from the Program; in other words, if living in an SRO would mean a smaller number of tenants and residents with pets compared to self-contained units and so smaller number of Program services provided in SRO building. The findings indicated that Atira's policies allow all of its tenants and residents to have pets and even before the Pet Outreach Program, staff were trying to support tenants and residents as much as they were able.

To reach this finding, the evaluation team examined a sample of 26 Atira programs. The sample includes buildings with self-contained units, shelters, SROs, and transitional housing. It is evident that tenants and residents have pets in all these different housing types, and received services from the Pet Outreach Program.

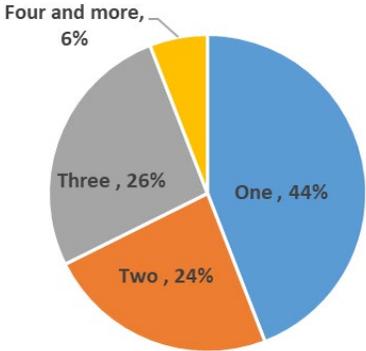
As indicated in the below graph, we can see that the top five programs that received services from the Program in the month of January 2022 include SROs, second-stage housing, and shelters.



It must be noted that the number of services in a building does not reflect the number of pets in that building. For example, The Hazelwood Hotel has a total of 34 pets compared to 20 pets at the Colonial however, during the month of January, pet services provided at the Colonial was higher.

It is estimated that approximately 300 pets live with their people at Atira buildings. This number is based on a sampling from nine buildings in which managers kept track of the number of pets in the building.

Data analyzed from the online survey has shown that approximately half of the tenants and residents who have pets have only one pet, while the other half have at least two pets (with 6% having four or more pets).



Recommendation 4: Atira building managers must ensure a solid system to track the number of pets (and type) in their programs.

Recommendation 5: Relationships between the building/program managers and the Pet Outreach Program must be strengthened in an effort to increase the opportunity to support tenants and residents with their pets and to support tenants and residents involved in animal hoarding.

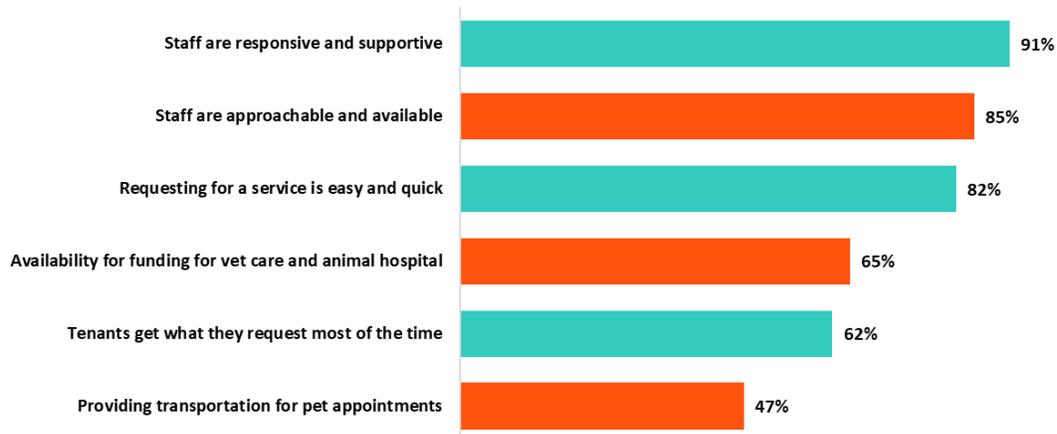
Recommendation 6: Better coordination is needed between the Pet Outreach Program and other services at Atira to better support people with pets; when somebody reaches out for help for their beloved animal(s), there is a chance there are other concerns/challenges they are also struggling with.

Finding 3: Services provided by the Program were highly rated by tenants and residents, which reflects the Program’s effectiveness of services implementation.

The analysis of the online survey has indicated a significant satisfaction rate with the Program services and the way the Program is implemented. 88% of surveyed tenants and residents indicated that they are highly satisfied with the services of the Program while 6% were somewhat satisfied, and another 6% had a neutral response (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied). When looking closely at the reasons for the neutral answers,

we will see the reason being the tenants and residents' need for more flea treatment services to be part of the Program.

Reasons for high satisfaction rates varied as below:



When asked if the Program covers all the services that they need for their pets, 79% of respondents indicated that the Program covers all the services they need while the other 21% indicated some of the services they would like the Program to consider adding in or expanding include:

- daycare for pets so that tenants and residents can go to their appointments without worrying about their pets. Many tenants who live within Atira buildings go to health facilities or hospitals regularly, as many have health conditions, and care for their pets is essential.
- Training services for dogs.
- Flea treatment services.
- More social activities, like pet parties and picnics.

Recommendation 7: Atira to continue providing the same diversified services and explore opportunities to add a pet daycare, dog training classes and social activities, and add flea treatments to its current pest-control program.

Finding 4: The number of newborn pets within Atira buildings is high and a clear plan and/or a coordinated approach must be in place to support newborns.

The number of animals being born within Atira's buildings is much higher than originally anticipated. Many of the people who care for these animals don't want to raise litters but don't have the means to get their animals spayed or neutered. With the support of the BCSPCA, the Pet Outreach Program was able to facilitate four cat neuters (\$280 each), three cat spays (\$390 each), and one dog spay (\$460). With the BCSPCA Outreach Program suspended, spay and neuter services are provided by Community Vet Outreach, partnered with the BCSPCA Hospital Trust.

Recommendation 8: Atira must have a clear plan with steps explaining what should be done in cases of newborns. The plan should include steps on what to do in case: 1) the tenant wants to keep the litter but can not afford to, 2) the

tenant does not want to keep the litter, and 3) a list of possible tenants and residents within Atira Programs that might be interested in raising a pet.

Finding 5: Cases of animal hoarding have been identified within Atira buildings. The Program staff works to ensure pets' health and safety.

The Program has addressed five animal hoarding cases in the past five months, each severe.

For example:

- The Program Coordinator was contacted by a building manager about a resident with 11 cats. When the Coordinator visited the tenant, it was found the number was closer to 18 including two who had just given birth, with their kittens dying of anemia from a severe flea infestation. The resident was not convinced there was a problem with his cats and the Program Coordinator was forced to involve the BCSPCA. The resident eventually agreed to surrender some of his cats, but the process has taken many months and is still not fully resolved.
- A tenant had 12 cats, kept in a cage. The tenant was uncooperative and would not allow the Program Coordinator into their room. Again, the Program Coordinator was forced to involve the BCSPCA and after many unsuccessful efforts by the Program Coordinator and the BCSPCA, the resident received a breach-of-tenancy letter from the building manager and agreed to give five cats away. They still have not let anyone inside the room to observe the remaining cats and the Program Coordinator and BCSPCA are still working on this case.

Recommendation 9: Atira building managers must regularly review and be familiar with Atira's pet policy, which forms part of tenant records, and be prepared to hold tenants accountable to the policy. It also important that all staff are aware of all actions that must be taken in different cases, including incidents of pet hoarding.



Finding 6: Pet Outreach Program staff has been highly appreciated by all Program participants, for their support and responsiveness.

As indicated under finding three, 91% of respondents to the survey indicated that Pet Outreach Program staff are supportive and responsive, while 85% described the staff as approachable and available.

Jesse Smith started in her role in October 2021. She is trained to do animal preliminary health exams and basic wound care. She has been able to save animals from trips to the vet by providing bandaging with regular changes, which can prevent infections, as well as ear cleaning, nail trimming and grooming matted fur. She has been working closely with the BCSPCA, UBC Community Vet Outreach Program, The Vancouver Humane Society and local clinics to support tenants and residents living within Atira buildings with their pets, and has tried her best to respond to all requests coming to the Program.

Jesse was previously a dog lead at a local shelter, creating and implementing training and behavior modification plans for dogs in care. She is Fear Free certified, using only low stress and rewards-based methods with animals. She has helped tenants and residents come up with plans and build skills with reactive dogs, work on basic manners, and helped come up with ideas around safety in the community, for them and their dogs. Living in small spaces with lots of animals can be difficult, so she is happy when folks see issues before they're a huge problem and they can work on solutions before an incident occurs.

"I have five cats and usually I am very embarrassed to ask for help. As the pet food and cat litter get expensive, it became hard for me to afford food and supplies for my cats. I am very thankful that there is a program that can help me with my Cat's food and litter. The staff is very nice and she always helps."

Shelline from the
Hazelwood

STORY: SYDNEY & HARLOW

Sydney and her dog Harlow live at Aoki Ross House. Harlow had a mirror fall on her and lacerate her leg, requiring stitches. Sydney spent the last of her money to get Harlow the help she needed.

Building staff reached out to the Pet Outreach Program asking if we could check in on Sydney and Harlow to see if we could be of help. Sydney let us know that Harlow required bandage changes every three - four days costing \$25 each visit, with cab fare costing an additional \$20 each way. Sydney was worried she would not be able to afford to continue care with the vet and was discouraged by how clinic staff treated her.

The Pet Outreach team assessed Harlow and felt she needed to be seen by the vet again as it looked like the wound was getting infected. We were able to organize a ride to the vet and back and help cover the cost of medications. Harlow required one more round of antibiotics to treat the infection. The clinic staff was worried her paw was getting too dirty but didn't provide any resources on how to keep her paw clean. From then on, the Pet Outreach Team took over helping with bandage changes and wound cleaning. We got a fabric dog boot for Harlow to wear over her bandage and advised Sydney on other tools she could use to help keep the area clean. We provided some fun "crate rest" ideas like nose work and puzzle toys while Harlow healed as the vet had advised keeping walking down to just bathroom breaks.

Each time we visited we noticed a significant difference in the cleanliness of Harlow's foot, and in Sydney herself. She was very upset, frustrated, and worried about her dog the first time we met - and she seemed brighter and happier as Harlow began to heal. We were able to take Harlow's stitches out ourselves, saving Sydney another costly visit to the vet. We are happy to report that Harlow has healed well and is happy and healthy.



STORY: LORNE & PRINCESS

Lorne lives at The Colonial and was convinced by a “friend” to breed his four-year-old French Bull Dog, Princess. Lorne rescued Princess when she was a puppy with Swimmer’s Syndrome and lovingly rehabbed her, eventually teaching her to walk.

French Bull Dog pups can fetch between \$1,000 - \$2,500 on the market. Unfortunately, French Bull Dogs have been bred across time so that it’s extremely risky for them to give birth naturally. Lorne’s “friend” promised they would pay for the necessary C-Section.

When Princess went into labour she live birthed three pups before the fourth got stuck, leaving that pup and three others stuck inside. The “friend” abandoned Lorne and Princess when the labour went bad. When Princess’s situation was brought to the attention of building staff she was rushed to an emergency veterinary hospital where they refused to operate until they had been paid in full. The Pet Outreach Program covered the cost of the emergency surgery and spay and fostered Princess until she was recovered. All seven of her pups passed.

Princess was returned to a very relieved Lorne a week later and in short order gained back all of the weight she lost through her ordeal.



STORY: FAMOUS BUBBA



Bubba is a popular resident of The London Hotel. He's a big Lab/Rottie/Shepherd mix with a goofy personality and bucket loads of charm. He loves chuck-it balls and follows his friends around when they have cookies.

Bubba is allergic to fleas and recently had an infestation so bad that he lost all the hair on his back and was chewing himself raw. Thanks to a vet appointment booked through the Pet Outreach Program and paid for by the BCSPCA, Bubba was able to get medication to keep his inflammation and itch down.

The Program staff were also able to get Clay (Bubba's guardian) connected to resources for free monthly flea medication through Charlie's Food Bank at 543 Powell Street, run by the BCSPCA. This connection is important to ensure Bubba's is well-taken care of and will have ongoing access to the services that he needs to keep him well.