



richmond addiction services

200-7900 Alderbridge Way, Richmond, BC V6X 2A5

Telephone: 604-270-9220 Fax: 604-270-9245

We are dedicated to providing expertise in preventing and treating addictions in our community.

February 21, 2012

David Weber
City Clerk
City of Richmond
6911 Number 3 Rd.
Richmond, BC
V6Y 2C1

Dear David,

Thank you for your voicemail message and yes, this letter is confirming my attendance at the upcoming Council meeting on February 27th as a delegation on a non-agenda item. There is a specific reason for my attendance and it has to do with the current level of funding that Richmond Addiction Services is contracted to receive from the BC Responsible and Problem Gambling Program to support portions of Richmond Addiction Services treatment and prevention programs.

I will include the letter that has been written to City Council as well as to Minister Coleman as information providing background to this non-agenda item for Council. The intention in bringing this situation to City Council's attention is that together with the City of Richmond, Vancouver Coastal Health, and the BC Responsible and Gambling Program Richmond Addiction Services have been offering a comprehensive Centre of Excellence in Prevention of Substance Misuse, Gambling and other Addictive Behaviours and this interdependent partnership is at risk of coming to an end.

My intention is that City Council will support Richmond Addiction Services in writing a letter and accepting a resolution to communicate the negative impact on the community of Richmond losing this tri-partite funding partnership to the detriment of the community. It would be the understanding of City Council that the current provider of services, Richmond Addiction Services, is a respected agency that has been operating in the community since 1975 and has been effective in providing the necessary services and programs. Furthermore, the community has benefitted from the leadership and innovation that Richmond Addiction Services has demonstrated since 1997 when the first contract with the Ministry began. Looking at all options to keep Richmond Addiction Services as the contracted provider of services is necessary to ensure that all the work that has been done in the community especially in the Chinese Community, the Richmond School District and throughout the community will not be lost.

Thank you for arranging this.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Dubras Digitally signed by Richard L. Dubras
DN: cn=Richard L. Dubras, o=Richmond Addiction Services,
ou=Richmond Addiction Services, email=richard.dubras@ra.ca,
c=CA

Richard Dubras M.Sc., M.Ed., R.C.C.

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February-10-2012

Mayor Brodie and City Councillors

City of Richmond

City of Richmond, 6911 Number 3 Rd.

Richmond, BC

V6Y 2C1

Dear Mayor Brodie and City Councillors,

As you all know Richmond Addiction Services has had a long standing relationship with the BC Responsible and Problem Gambling Program (BC R&PGP). RASS has been the contracted agency for the BC Responsible and Problem Gambling Program (BCR&PGP) to provide both gambling prevention and gambling counselling services in Richmond, BC.

Despite this long standing and positive relationship, the RASS Board of Directors have decided that unless the funding model changes for 2012 – 2013 with respect to the contract with the BC R&PGP, RASS will no longer be able to cover the deficit caused by the chronic under-funding of the prevention and clinical contracts associated with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. This letter is to ask the City of Richmond for support in helping RASS maintain these contracts by urging the BC government to change the funding formula so that the community can look forward to the continuation of the contracted services that RASS has offered for the clinical and prevention programming in this community since 1997.

I want to also make sure is that despite this proposed change in funding from the BC R&PGP, it does not change the work that the City of Richmond funds RASS to complete through its annual grant process. RASS management and staff are committed to the work that is funded by the City to complete for the next three years.

As you are well aware, RASS has worked with the City of Richmond and other stakeholders to develop and implement a problem gambling strategy for the City, and this strategy is currently being reviewed by City Staff for a renewal of a 5 year strategy. RASS has also worked with Chinese organizations such as SUCCESS over many years to address the significant gambling issues in the Chinese community. RASS has one of the few Chinese-speaking problem-gambling counsellors who is able to successfully connect with Chinese-speaking clients. Sadly, these services will have to change due to inadequate funding from the BC R&PGP.

Richmond Addiction Services has partnered with SUCCESS in facilitating and helping promote the Problem Gambling program in the Chinese community and some rent has been paid to SUCCESS per month to support the office space for our Chinese Counsellor. However, not

enough funding has ever been provided so that together RASS and SUCCESS could really create a culturally informed promotion and awareness campaign focused on the Chinese Problem Gambler. Recently, RASS committed to renewing the Problem Gambling strategy in Richmond for 2012-2017 and with stakeholders have put together a 5 year plan for Council's consideration. No commitment has yet been made by BC R&PGP to put resources into supporting such a plan—in spite of this being a significant issue in this community.

The funding model used by the BC R&PGP operates on a fee-for-service basis that does not fully cover our costs to deliver services, especially because we are a unionized agency covered by the health sector collective agreements. The fee-for-service model focuses on a narrow set of services and does not cover all of the costs associated with providing a comprehensive range of prevention and counselling services.

Efforts to persuade the BC R&PGP to consider a different funding model, and preferably a contract for services similar to how Vancouver Coastal Health contracts for services—based on deliverables and covering of all costs—have not been successful. Instead, individual contractors will be paid to deliver services on a piece-meal basis as happens in many other communities.

Here is what will be lost if RASS is not supported in maintaining the BC R&PGP Contract:

1. The BC R&PGP will no longer benefit from the long standing community partnerships it has developed through Richmond Addiction Services
2. That any new BC R&PGP contract holders will create confusion and overlap between service providers and will cause more work for community coordination
3. There will no longer be a delivery of services according to best and promising practices as there will be uncoordinated prevention efforts happening in the same community with little communication and collaboration - similar to many other communities in BC.
4. RASS will have to layoff current staff members

At provincial planning tables, RASS services have been the envy of many as we offered a one stop shop for treatment and prevention services in the community. Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), the City of Richmond and the Ministry for Public Safety and Solicitor General were working together to provide a continuum of services with one provider. Unless a different funding model is created this will be lost in a community where specific and targeted prevention efforts work and work well.

We have contacted our local MLA, Linda Reid, and with her assistance have written to the Minister responsible of the BC R&PGP, Shirley Bond. The letter is attached.

We hope this provides you with the necessary information so that together we can urge the Provincial government to appropriately fund these gambling prevention and clinical programs.

Sincerely,

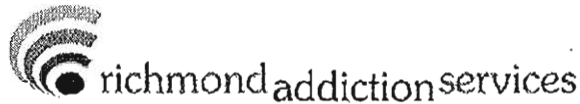
Richard L. Dubras, M.Sc., M.Ed., R.C.C.,
Executive Director

CC: Kelly Ng – Acting COO of SUCCESS

CC: Linda Reid MLA Richmond East

CC: Christine Kline – Richmond Addiction Services Board Chair

CC: Lesley Sherlock – City Planner, City of Richmond



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February-13-2012

HONOURABLE RICH COLEMAN

MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINES AND MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR HOUSING
PO BOX 9060 STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA BC V8W 9E3

Dear Minister Coleman,

I am the Executive Director of Richmond Addiction Services Society (RASS) and our agency has had a long standing relationship with the BC Responsible and Problem Gambling Program since 1997. I became the Executive Director in May 2010 and it became immediately obvious that the funding of our Problem Gambling treatment and prevention programs was not appropriate given the type of programming that has been successful in Richmond incorporating the expense of our staff and the cost of operating an agency.

RASS has been the contracted agency for the BC Responsible and Problem Gambling Program (BC R&PGP) to provide both gambling prevention and gambling counselling services in Richmond, BC. RASS has played a key role in the community in addressing gambling issues. When the River Rock Casino was developed in Richmond, RASS worked with the City of Richmond and other stakeholders to develop and implement a problem gambling strategy for the City, and this strategy was recently updated and renewed. RASS has also worked with Chinese organizations such as SUCCESS over many years to address the significant gambling issues in the Chinese community. RASS has one of the few Chinese-speaking problem-gambling counsellors who are able to successfully connect with Chinese-speaking clients. Sadly, these services will have to end due to inadequate funding from the BC R&PGP.

Situation:

- Richmond Addiction Services is a unionized agency and the clinical counselling employee providing the problem gambling counselling is at the highest level and grid for a counsellor. He is a member of the Health Science Professionals Paramedical CBA. In order to try and solve this funding issue, a lower grid level employee was hired to fulfill the majority of the prevention contract however even at this level the billable hours is not enough to cover her staff cost

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- The fee for service model of contracting has never adequately covered the cost of delivering services.
- The new Intake procedures established in 2010 have resulted in decreased referral rate to RASS. Before, RASS could receive referrals directly. Direct referrals made it easier for persons to seek help from a trusted provider such as RASS.
- The new tiered levels introduced for Counsellor's has resulted in our counsellor to be classified as a Level II Counsellor despite being an approved problem gambling counsellor Counselling since 1997 and being supervised by a Registered Clinical Counsellor. This Level II designation does not allow him to assess the mental health of English speaking clients but Inconsistently he is able to offer intake for Chinese speaking clients. (He is one of the few counsellors who can speak Chinese and thus serve the Chinese-speaking community and the significant issues affecting that community.)
- Reduced billing options which no longer incorporate internal Problem Gambling planning meetings, and clinical supervision and therefore again, reduced billing of actual time worked
- Very little support for community based marketing and promotion of clinical and prevention services for populations needing language and culturally specific information targeting the Chinese, South Asian and Filipino (Tagalog) community members
- The BC R&PGP has taken full responsibility for development and creativity for program materials. Recently it was suggested that community agencies are supposed to be the experts of their community and should be doing more promotion and marketing and know how to do this work. However, RASS is not able to bill for this type of strategic and development work.
- Removing geographical areas in contracts despite our successful work in those geographical areas

Richmond Addiction Services has partnered with SUCCESS in facilitating and helping promote the Problem Gambling program in the Chinese community and some rent has been paid to SUCCESS per month to support the office space for our Chinese Counsellor. However, not enough funding has ever been provided so that together RASS and SUCCESS could really create a culturally informed promotion and awareness campaign focused on the Chinese Problem Gambler. Recently, RASS committed to renewing the Problem Gambling City strategy in Richmond for 2012-2017 and with stakeholders have put together a 5 year plan. No commitment has yet been made by BC R&PGP to put resources into supporting such a plan—in spite of this being a significant issue in this community.

It is clear from the last email received from David Horricks (Manager of BC R&PGP) that he believes he has exercised all his options and is ready to let go of this long standing contractual relationship.

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Therefore, I want to be clear about what will be lost if RASS and SUCCESS is not supported in maintaining the BC Problem Gambling Contract.

1. The BC Problem Gambling Program will lose a significant member of the team who has been working in the field since 1997
2. The Problem Gambling Program will no longer benefit from the long standing community partnerships it has developed through Richmond Addiction Services
3. The prevention services in Richmond will no longer be a part of the broader Strategy that the City of Richmond and Richmond Addiction Services is currently developing
4. That any new BC Problem Gambling Program contract holders will create confusion and overlap between service providers and will cause more work for community coordination
5. There will no longer be a delivery of services according to best and promising practices as there will be uncoordinated prevention efforts happening in the same community with little communication and collaboration - similar to many other communities in BC.

At provincial planning tables, RASS services have been the envy of many as we offered a one stop shop for treatment and prevention services in the community. Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), the City of Richmond and the Ministry for Public Safety and Solicitor General were working together to provide a continuum of services with one provider. Unless a different funding model is created this will be lost in a community where specific and targeted prevention efforts work and work well.

I hope this gives you some insight into the commitment of our agency for this work in Richmond and which we are currently at risk of losing.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Dubras, M.Sc., M.Ed., R.C.C.,
Executive Director

CC: Linda Reid MLA Richmond East
CC: Christine Kline – Richmond Addiction Services Board Chair

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