



January 11, 2022  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Older Adults Offered Free Training to Become Senior Peer Counsellors**

Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives (RCRG), a local non-profit organization, is recruiting volunteers for its Senior Peer Counselling program.

In the program, older adults meet one-on-one with fellow seniors, providing them with emotional support and connecting them to community resources.

“Our clients might be experiencing anxiety, depression, loneliness, or grief after losing a loved one,” says Carol Dickson, Manager of RCRG’s Seniors Community Support Services. “Senior Peer Counsellors help them reflect on the challenges they’re facing and arrive at possible solutions.”

The program is premised on the belief that seniors prefer speaking with other older adults, who might share similar life experiences. In addition, because the Counsellors are all volunteers, clients often feel more at ease and are thus more willing to open up.

“For many seniors, navigating the healthcare system can be confusing and intimidating,” says Dickson. “Our Counsellors provide an important point of connection, offering clients immediate support, but also serving as a bridge to other health and community services.”

Before becoming Senior Peer Counsellors, volunteers must complete a free, 44-hour training course, covering topics like communication, active listening and empathetic response, and stress management.

The next training session begins February 1, and will take place virtually.

“For older adults, this is a unique and truly rewarding volunteer opportunity,” says Dickson. “You’ll gain new skills, but you’ll also be encouraged to draw on your own knowledge and experience. You’ll find that, simply by listening and being supportive, you can have a transformative impact on a senior’s life.”

The Senior Peer Counselling program is supported by the Gilmore and Courtyard Gardens Community Fund, as well as the Jewish Seniors Alliance.

To learn more about becoming a Senior Peer Counsellor, call 604-279-7020 or email [cdickson@rcrg.org](mailto:cdickson@rcrg.org).

Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives (RCRG) is a registered charity that serves as a hub for volunteering and giving. RCRG is also a direct service provider, operating a Child Care Resource & Referral Centre, the Richmond Christmas Fund, and a variety of Seniors Community Support Services. [www.rcrg.org](http://www.rcrg.org)



**Photo Caption:** RCRG's next training session for Senior Peer Counsellors starts February 1. The free, 44-hour course will provide older adults with the skills, tools, and knowledge to offer emotional support to fellow seniors. To sign up or learn more, call 604-279-7020 or email [cdickson@rcrg.org](mailto:cdickson@rcrg.org).

-30-

For more information, please contact:

**Ryan Luetzen**  
Manager, Resource Development & Communications  
Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives  
604-279-7020 / [rluetzen@rcrg.org](mailto:rluetzen@rcrg.org)