

Citation for *British Columbia Centre for Disease Control Outreach Street Nursing Program*

This citation is for the whole team of the Outreach Street Nursing Program of BCCDC.

The BCCDC was established in 1988 as an STI/HIV prevention program, today comprising full and part-time nurses and healthcare workers. The team is committed to improving the quality of life of people who are among the most marginalised and stigmatised in society, typically those who use drugs, who are homeless, have mental health problems, are involved in the sex industry, have been trafficked, incarcerated, or who have become rootless for any number of reasons. The team goes out to meet and provide care for clients in settings that include the streets, alleys, parks, hotels, internet chat sites, etc. It begins with what is important to the individuals, and therefore its program is complex and changing, responsive and collaborative.

The team has a clinical as well as an educative role. The clinical role is focussed not only on access to health care, but also to food, housing, income and other services that are crucial in addressing the health and social needs of vulnerable people. Harm reduction and health promotion approaches are used. The team develops relationships with individuals and organisations to build the pathways that enhance personal and community health.

In their educative role, the team members collaborate with, support and mentor nurses from other health authorities and across the province. The Outreach Nurses recently partnered with documentary film maker Nettie Wild and Canada Wild Productions to create and produce an educational interactive DVD called *Bevel Up; Drugs, Users and Outreach Nursing* as a way to share knowledge with other nurses. Health Canada, the National Film Board, and the British Columbia Nurses Union provided funding. *Bevel Up* is a 45-minute documentary with 3.5 hours of additional chapters, nursing reflections and topic areas. It has received several awards and is available in English, French, and Russian (for use in Russia and eastern Europe). *Bevel Up* has been influential as a tool for community development and a catalyst for dialogue in health and social policy circles. Several of the nurses have worked through the program for HIV prevention in Vietnam and the Balkans.

The DVD has been shown widely in nursing education programmes and used by clinical educators throughout Canada and in the USA. Human rights violations can exist in the design and implementation of any health policies and health services. The team recognizes this and their practice is therefore based on an understanding that health and human rights act in synergy. They have become expert practitioners and passionate political advocates and educators, ensuring that fair and equitable treatment of all people is practiced. Values of caring, social justice, respect and dignity therefore guide their work, aware that a vibrant society depends on a strong link between human rights and health.

One of the group's sponsors wrote 'In this country [Canada] I can think of no other group so deserving of this award