

Healthy People, Strong Communities



United Way
Central & Northern
Vancouver Island

Senior-based Services Help Elderly Residents Remain Independent

Last winter Pat Callaghan was living with several burnt out pot lights for a couple of weeks in her home. The 73-year-old Comox Valley resident has knee injuries and other health conditions that prevent her from using a ladder to change the light bulbs.

“My husband did all of the yard work and maintenance when he was well,” said Callaghan. “My medical conditions don’t allow me to do things around the house like I used to such as painting the walls or gardening.”

Callaghan read an article in the newspaper about Better at Home, a United Way managed program that offers services to help seniors with simple day-to-day tasks and remain independent in their own home. Pat called for more information and was able to receive regular home visits from Moore’s Cleaning and Maintenance Services for an affordable fee.

Callaghan has been using the Better at Home services since December. “I find it’s very unique because the cleaners are a husband and wife team. Bill does the home maintenance while Bonnie cleans. If there isn’t any maintenance to do, Bill and I usually chat and it’s nice to get some social time in.”

United Way Central and Northern Vancouver Island (UWCNVI) manages the Better at Home program, funded by the Government of British Columbia, while local organizations and volunteers provide the services.

When Callaghan’s husband became sick with terminal cancer, the retired couple decided to move closer to the hospital in Comox. Before they could move into their new home, George was admitted into the hospital for almost a year. Callaghan spent most of her time by her

husband’s side at the hospital. She never took time to unpack. Her new home didn’t really feel like home. “I feel so settled in my home now thanks to Bill and



Bonnie,” says Callaghan.

“Better at Home Services are based on our client’s income. We rely on local companies to help provide services such as housecleaning and yard work to people at a discounted rate,” says Sheena Campbell, Project Coordinator for Better at Home in the Comox Valley.

United Way Central and Northern Vancouver Island manages Better at Home services in Port Hardy, Campbell River, Comox Valley, Port Alberni, Nanaimo, Parksville and Cowichan Valley. Thousands of seniors access housekeeping, yard work and maintenance, friendly visits, grocery shopping and other services on a regular basis.

To read more stories about people you have helped, visit uwcncvi.ca.