

# HUMAN SERVICES UPDATES 2023-2024

## HEALTH, NURSING AND MENTAL HEALTH

- Vaccine support offered to citizens locally and in Ethlathesse. This includes the ongoing COVID-19 boosters, Influenza clinics and drop ins, and Routine child and adult vaccinations. UTG nurse provides support for citizens who live away from the Port Alberni area on vaccines such as offering any education on the vaccines, or immunization schedules as requested. All staff are offered the COVID-19 and annual influenza vaccines to keep our citizens risk level at low while they are in the offices and at gatherings.
- On going Nursing supports offered in the way of Health Promotion (such as heart and stroke awareness, medication assistance, elder support, blood pressure monitoring, vaccine clinics, foot care, kidney check program...) UTG care aide assists elders and citizens requiring extra support with their activities of daily living such as medication use, light house keeping, drs appointments and shopping.
- Baby group sessions at Nucii once a month with UTG nurse, care aide and a Registered Dietician. These groups offer a safe space for new moms and babies to come play, share a meal, and get health tips from the nurse and the dietician. An elder will join us in providing culture such as drumming, signing, and story telling.
- Harm Reduction support to unhoused and vulnerable citizens. Including Naloxone training and kit distribution. Regular check ins with the unhoused to offer supports such as hot meals, warm clothing, sleeping bags, toiletries, outside support such as Mental health, housing, and temporary shelter. Assistance from the UTG health care team to support citizens wanting to enter treatment centres. This includes all intake and referrals, as well as TB testing support.
- Mobile hearing clinics set up at Nucii through out the year for citizens wanting to have screenings done.
- Physiotherapist and Massage Therapist come to Nucii to offer support to our Elders and citizens needing alternative therapies for increased mobility and health concerns. The physiotherapist is here once a month seeing 2-3 clients. The Massage therapist is here 3-4 times a year.

- Nurse collaborations on ongoing basis with other health care professionals to help citizens navigate through the health care system such as specialist appointments, Physio/Massage, general advocacy. Working with the health care system to address challenges peoples face while accessing care, as well as working on ways to address the shortages of health care access such as Drs and Mental health Practitioners.
- Nurse addressing different health crisis's and natural disasters throughout the year such as the heat domes, floods, cold snaps, and forest fires. Offering support as able to provide some relief to those affected by the events.
- Continual work with FNHA and Island health for ongoing educational opportunities for UTG Nurse such as Infection control principles, vaccine support and chronic disease management.
- Elders' lunches/breakfasts monthly at Nucii. This will involve health discussions, or guest speakers to offer education and guidance on varying health supports and topics.
- This year UTG supported Elders at the annual Elders gathering in Vancouver in the summer. This was a two-day event August 13-14<sup>th</sup> 2023.
- Elders monthly hamper cheques for elders 55 plus who registered. \$550 CAN a month, or \$385 US a month.
- UTG hired a Mental Health Clinician that works with the human services department in 2023. She has been supporting 1 on 1 counselling services. As well offers group and family sessions. She supports school aged children in SD70, elementary and secondary. The Clinician attends Human services events and works in collaboration with the team and Nurse with baby groups, and elders' topics. New this month we are starting a women's group and mental health 101 sessions with varying topics every month.

### CHILD AND YOUTH FAMILY SERVICES

- Our First Christmas Dinner was hosted in person since the pandemic. This was a catered turkey dinner with all the fixings at Echo Centre in Port Alberni. We had a large turnout of 80 + citizens. Door prizes, and gifts for all the children from Santa.
- Annual UTG picnic was held in Ethlateese at the newly completed Wellness centre in September. Support was offered to citizens to attend that lived

outside the Port Alberni area. With the assistance of the Lands and Resources team and the Francis Barkley, we were able to boat in everyone for the day. This was a great event for many citizens to come back home and reconnect with family.

- Health and Wellness cheque distributions, 4 distributions per year provided to enrolled citizens.
- Food hampers and supports provided to citizens in hardship through connection to the Human Services team.
- Recreational activities reimbursed to citizens for school aged children. This includes sports camps/fees, summer camps etc..
- UTG shirts for truth and reconciliation day designed by one of our UTG youth this year. Handed out to local citizens and citizens that requested and came by during the picnic.
- Director of Human Services Offering support to Children in Care by collaborating with USMA, MCFD, and Kw'umut Lelum.
- Director of Human Services acting as the UTG representative for the children in care to advocate for their traditional and cultural rights. Communications with children, and caregivers to ensure children in care are invited to all events hosted by human services department.
- Director of Human Services assists families of children in care with any supports such as seeking counselling, Health appointments, or seeking parenting/relationship courses.
- Director of Human Services has/will assist as a UTG representative at any court hearings for children in care.
- New child allowance fund commenced for all enrolled citizens up to age 16. This is a monthly cheque of \$100 upon approval.

### CULTURE

- Human Services department hired on a Cultural worker during 2023. He is currently working on Language revitalization for UTG. He will be preparing a final presentation in September as to what UTG has voiced through out the calls and survey's a language program would look like for UTG.
- Incorporation of culture such as opening prayers, chants, and drumming at events.
- Cultural workshops such as drum making and Rattle making at Nucii.

- Traditional Garden has been built and seeds planted. This is an extension off our local garden. A grand opening was held in September where signage was made in Nuuchahnulth dialect for all the plants. This was made with the assistance of UTG elders and UTG cultural worker.
- Men's group hosted by UTG Cultural worker, the men are meeting bi weekly with talks guided by the men addressing issues like mental health, connection to self and land etc..
- Warriors' youth program to commence this year. UTG cultural worker on getting the program started. The purpose of this program is to connect the youth and young adults to each other through traditional ways of learning. Land based experiences and life skills.
- A Reclaiming my language 10 week session was co instructed by UTG mental health clinician and UTG cultural worker. This was done with the guidance and support from First Peoples to work with 10 citizens who grew up with language being taught or spoken. Cognitive behavior therapy was incorporated into the sessions to help citizens bring back memories of their language.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Continued to support post-secondary students and review new applications for 2023-2024 School year. Assistance with living allowance while the students are in full time studies.
- Monthly attendance cheque for Uchucklesaht students grade 7-12 who demonstrate consistent attendance.
- Human Services Department hosted a graduation dinner at Nucii for all our grads, High School and Post secondary. As well, we honoured all our Honor roll and scholarships recipients from k-12.
- Summer Camp held at Nucii. One week in July and one week in August. Activities included were Boat rides to Ethlatheese, forest walks, gardening at the UTG garden, cooking and baking with our elders and Dietician, bowling, swimming, water park and other activities.
- Supported Uchucklesaht parents with school supply allowances in September 2023. This year a clothing allowance was added on in recognition of inflation and high costs of living.

- UTG education worker checks in with students, see where support is needed, tutoring support offered. New starting in April a homework club will be hosted by the education worker and elder Thomas Rush.
- Monthly Pro-D Day packages and or events at Nucii. Including arts/crafts and educational opportunities for our youth such as internet safety by RCMP.
- UTG Education worker continues to attend the SD70 Indigenous Education Advisory Committee monthly meetings.
- Spring break camp, one-week daily programming for youth in the Port Alberni area. This includes recreation and arts and crafts for the kids.
- Skills Link Program career planning workshops have had 7 workshops this year. These workshops are aimed at Uchucklesaht Youth aged 15-30. Topics include resume building, cover letters, interview skills, and hearing from guest speakers in various industries. The session wrapped up with a Career fair hosted at Nucii which had reps from the RCMP, INEO, Island health, Wild fire services, Flagging and others.
- Supporting Uchucklesaht citizens through employment training which approved based on an application process.

### UTG GARDEN

- The UTG garden had a successful growing year last season. Providing citizens a rotating distribution of fresh produce and berries when available. These produce bags were given out weekly from June to September, roughly 10-15 bags were made up every week.
- Held bi-weekly educational garden events for Uchucklesaht citizens throughout the growing season, covering garden topics such as seed-starting, weeding and salve-making.
- There are 41 garden beds in the UTG garden, not including the traditional garden beds. Vines of blackberries grow along side the fencing.



Reclaiming my language participants at the last session in Ethlateese 2023.





Baby group session



Community picnic photo, August 2023 Wellness centre in Ethlateese.



Grad dinner, July 2023 Honor role, scholarship, High school and Post secondary grads.



UTG walking challenge event, June 2023





Workshop at the UTG garden, June 2023