VULNERABLE CLIENT PROTOCOL

We are all aware that COVID-19 has created an emergency in our society. Our governments, health authorities and municipalities are establishing plans to manage the situation as best they can. There are vulnerable populations in every community, including the Capital Region of BC, and these individuals require a focused needs analysis and protocols for strategic support.

While ICA’s offices are closed to the public, our staff continue to provide essential services for resettled refugees and immigrants to support their health and wellbeing by phone, video-conferencing or using social distancing if meetings need to be held in-person. We are committed to doing everything we can to ensure the well-being of the newcomers we serve and our staff.

IMMIGRANTS IN THE CAPITAL REGION

As the primary settlement agency in the Capital Region, with the responsibility for refugee resettlement and immigrant integration in Victoria, we are providing critical and essential services for the 900+ clients that we consider to be the most vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic.

10,395 newcomer immigrants & refugees (arrivals 2015 to present)

3683 newcomers accessing ICA’s settlement services

25% of ICA clients identified as highly vulnerable & requiring additional support

COVID-19
Who are ICA’s highly vulnerable clients?

Highly vulnerable clients include refugees, single mothers, individuals with disabilities, complex health needs, seniors, those suffering from trauma, exposure to family violence, barriers due to language, culture, financial (lack of credit history), and who face food security concerns.

INTERVENTION PLAN

ICA staff have identified highly vulnerable clients and have been reaching out to them remotely by phone, email, and/or video conferencing, as well as apps such as WhatsApp and Google Translate.

A needs assessment is being conducted, and an intervention plan developed to support them and their families during this time. As highly vulnerable clients are identified, they are being contacted by individual ICA staff to check-in with the client and assess the following:

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<th>Step</th>
<th>Task</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Identify client’s level of awareness of the COVID-19 pandemic situation and recommended protocols and procedures.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Identify clients who may be experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or health related concerns.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Assess preparedness level with regard to food supply, medicine and other basic necessities.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Inform clients on how to access medical, emergency and relief services, if needed.</td>
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ICA staff will support client(s) in the development of an Action Plan to address their immediate needs. In cases where the clients are not capable of addressing their needs with minimum support, an Intervention Plan will be developed and followed up by their Settlement Worker and supported by other team members where applicable.

**ICA staff will:**

- Conduct regular case consultations
- Provide resources and supports to address client needs
- Act as navigators to help clients access services – encourage & empower
- Regularly communicate with clients to ensure support and security
- Create a coordinated response plan for immediate implementation
- Stay informed on relevant available up-to-date resources
- Share coordinated response plans with team members and partners as they progress
- Maintain overall case management until all immediate needs are met

**PARTNERS**

ICA recognizes the urgency of working collaboratively and effectively with key partners who are also supporting the health, housing, financial and basic daily needs of this population. We are working in tandem with many partners already and will continue to identify partners to act as resources and guides to provide the best support to clients.
RESOURCES NEEDED

Based on the needs our clients, and what we predict may result given the uncertainty of this situation, we are looking for the following resources to support with logistics:

- Protective gear for staff and clients (masks, gloves, sanitization materials)
- $20,000 for emergency food, medicine and disability support
- Prepaid credit cards
- Designated transportation (taxis, deliveries of food, medicine, and appointments)
- Additional housing, hotels, apartments (self-isolation needs)
- Access to family support / family violence counselor
- Access to crisis counselors
- Additional cellphones and tablets
- Additional resources for virtual learning and work (headsets and microphones)

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