

Evidence-Based Report

# Tell-a-Friend Campaign

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# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
Project Background and Goals	4
Definition of Settlement Services	5
<b>Review of Published Evidence of Newcomer Initiatives</b>	<b>6</b>
1. CHALLENGES OF CURRENT SYSTEM	6
1.1 Language	6
1.2 Level of Trust	7
2. COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR APPROACH	9
2.1 Characteristics of a Community Navigator	10
2.1.1 Caring	10
2.1.2 Prior Immigrants	11
2.1.3 Culturally Competent	13
2.2 Planning for Navigators: Training & Organization	14
3. COMMUNITY OUTREACH	16
3.1 Cultural Influences	17
3.1.1 Chinese	17
3.1.2 South Asian	19
3.1.3 Filipino	19
<b>Review of Recent Immigrant and Refugee Campaigns</b>	<b>20</b>
4. METHODS	20
5. IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE CHALLENGES	21
5.1 Language Barriers	21

5.2 Accessibility of Information	23
5.3 Lack of Transportation	24
5.4 Lack of Childcare Support	24
5.5 Cultural Barriers	24
5.5.1 Chinese	25
5.5.2 Punjabi	26
6. OUTREACH SOLUTIONS	27
6.1 Use of Media	27
6.1.1 WeChat	28
6.2 Partnerships with businesses, community organizations, and others	29
6.3 Use of Community Navigators	30
7. COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS	31
7.1 Recruitment	32
7.2 Characteristics	33
7.3 Training	34
<b>Discussion</b>	<b>36</b>
Strengths	36
Gaps	38
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>40</b>
References	42
TABLE 1: Informant Table	44

## Executive Summary

This report was conducted to determine how a Tell-a-Friend campaign could increase access to settlement services in Vancouver, as the 2016 Vancouver Immigrant Survey determined that 33% of recent immigrants and refugees did not access settlement services (City of Vancouver, 2016).

Published literature and informant interviews highlight culture, trust, language, and accessibility as barriers to accessing information; these may prevent immigrants from accessing settlement services. Settlement service utilization may be increased by “Tell”-ing the public through newspapers, posters, and radio information circulation. Culturally specific outreach methods include WeChat for the Chinese population and locations of worship for the South Asian population. However, research indicates that peer-to-peer, aka “Friend-to-Friend” information sharing is the most effective way to increase information access through community partnerships and Community Navigator programs. Moreover, research affirms that the Community Navigator approach is affordable, feasible, and successful in the Lower Mainland for information dissemination.

The writers’ final recommendations are to:

- Research the ‘user’ subcultures of Vancouver before finalizing a Tell-a-Friend campaign design;
- Partner with pre-existing organizations and businesses; and
- Consider the development of culturally competent Community Navigators

## Project Background and Goals

The City of Vancouver issued the Vancouver Immigrant Survey in 2016 and determined that 33% of the survey respondents did not access settlement services (City of Vancouver, 2016). In response, the Vancouver Immigration Partnership (VIP) developed a New Start Strategy over 16 months, engaging 120 individuals from 72 organizations and groups. The New Start Strategy focuses on four themes: enhancing access to services; strengthening intercultural and civic engagement; building welcoming and inclusive workplaces; government and public institutions addressing needs. VIP's New Start Strategy Action 1.8, under "enhancing access to services" considers creating a "Tell-a-Friend" campaign to encourage long-term residents to pass their knowledge of services to recent immigrants and refugees. This evidence-based review will discuss past published and unpublished findings of similar campaigns with the goal of information distribution throughout the community. Ultimately, this research is intended to determine the most effective campaign design to improve access to services for immigrants and refugees living in Vancouver.

## Definition of Settlement Services

Settlement services are federally funded services intended to help immigrants and refugees engage and experience meaningful access to resources and quality services (City of Vancouver, 2016). Settlement services may include: needs assessment and referrals, information and orientation, language training, employment-related services, and community connections (City of Vancouver, 2016). There are 25 Vancouver organizations funded by the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) which provide settlement services to newcomers (City of Vancouver, 2016). Other important services for newcomers are provided by broad-based community service organizations, however, they are not funded by the IRCC (City of Vancouver, 2016). The Tell-a-Friend campaign would focus on improving accessibility to IRCC funded settlement services, rather than broad-based community services. Some settlement services have specific eligibility criteria, although in general all users must be permanent residents, caregivers, protected persons, or hold a temporary resident permit (City of Vancouver, 2016).

# Review of Published Evidence of Newcomer Initiatives

## 1. CHALLENGES OF CURRENT SYSTEM

There are a number of barriers that make access to information regarding settlement services challenging for new immigrants and refugees. Many articles in the literature discuss the relationship between immigrants and their access to healthcare information. The findings can also be applied to newcomers accessing settlement service information. Through the literature search, the writers identified two main challenges within the current system which must be addressed when integrating immigrants and refugees into the community: language and trust (Kazemipur, 2012; Majka & Longazel, 2017; Wang & Handy, 2013; Woodgate et al., 2017; Zou & Parry, 2012). Other challenges include proximity to services, isolation, lack of childcare, reduced access to technology, stigma associated with accessing care, and fear of immigration status being questioned or reported (Woodgate et al., 2017; Zou & Parry, 2012).

### 1.1 Language

Overcoming language barriers can be a major challenge for immigrants and refugees when they first arrive in their host country (Zou & Parry, 2012). Zou and Parry (2012) collected immigration statistics about literacy rates from official websites in Canada and the United States, reviewing them in the context of health education for immigrants. Language is seen as a major barrier, as it hinders

immigrants' ability to communicate, understand, and accept education from others in their host country, including interpreters and professionals (Woodgate et al., 2017; Zou & Parry, 2012). Linguistic barriers also influence immigrants' motivation to seek education, impairs their ability to access educational resources and network, and decreases their chances of understanding and applying education to their lives (Majka & Longazel, 2017; Todd & Hoffman-Goetz, 2011; Zou & Parry, 2012). Woodgate et al. (2017) conducted a qualitative study with 83 families who immigrated from African countries to Manitoba and determined that language barriers affect individuals' ability to access health care information. In addition, Woodgate et al. (2017), Majka & Longazel (2017), and Shommu et al. (2016) recognize the importance of professional interpreters in immigrant and refugee communities. If the information does not have a direct English translation, it may be misunderstood by the individual (Woodgate et al., 2017).

## **1.2 Level of Trust**

Trust is a major challenge for immigrants and refugees immigrating to a new country. Kazemipur (2012) conducted a study to determine whether there is a difference in the level of community involvement between immigrants and native-born Canadians and also assess variables that may affect either population. Data was used from the Canadian General Social Survey which had been administered to approximately 25,000 Canadians (Kazemipur, 2012). This survey was designed to assess different aspects and components of community engagement (Kazemipur, 2012). Kazemipur (2012) determined that both western and

non-western immigrants arrive with virtually identical levels of relatively high trust. In non-western immigrants however, trust increased at a slower rate (Kazemipur, 2012). Trust levels in both groups changed according to the length of time they had been in their host country, which Kazemipur (2012) believes is the result of the differences in social interactions following their arrival to Canada. Kazemipur (2012) concluded that the longer immigrants reside in a country, the more their high level of trust and confidence is lost. This decline was seen in both groups, though more prevalent in non-western immigrants (Kazemipur, 2012). Immigrants typically migrate as they are searching for a better future; those who choose Canada believe it is a place this can be achieved (Kazemipur, 2012). Their initial optimism and trust are reinforced by comparing their old and new homes; their former home being the reference point (Kazemipur, 2012). As time passes, memories of this reference point fade and more of their opinions are formed by experiences in their new society (Kazemipur, 2012). These experiences start to feel less promising and immigrants become less trusting when they no longer compare their new and old homes (Kazemipur, 2012). In addition, Wang and Handy (2013) noted that immigrants may have lower levels of social trust than native-born Canadians. Wang and Handy (2013) conducted a study using data from the Canadian Equality, Security, and Community Survey from winter 2003 to investigate the immigrants' and native-born Canadians' involvement in voluntary organizations. Individuals of at least 18 years old were randomly selected for telephone interviews; 512 immigrants and 2,208 native-born Canadians were included in the study (Wang

and Handy, 2013). Immigrants may have less trust as they are less familiar with their new environment (Wang and Handy, 2013). They may also be more likely to participate in and volunteer for their own religious organizations where they find it easier to trust people (Wang and Handy, 2013). Immigrants' trust in the government can be associated with their involvement in voluntary organizations (Wang and Hardy, 2013). Wang and Handy (2013) detected a statistically significant difference between immigrants and native-born Canadians; natives have higher trust in other people, but less trust in the local government as a result of stronger informal social support networks (Wang and Handy, 2013).

## **2. COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR APPROACH**

The writers found a program currently used in healthcare settings that addresses the two main barriers newcomers face. Community Navigator programs can help newcomers access information from settlement services and also fulfil VIP's recommendation to create a Tell-a-Friend campaign. With the same goal of information dissemination, Shommu et al. (2016) studied outreach and access to health information by conducting a systematic scoping review, reporting the effects of a Community Navigator on immigrants or ethnic minorities in Canada and the United States. They found a total of 29 articles from the United States and one from Canada, indicating that culturally competent Community Navigators may be a solution to reduce future healthcare barriers in immigrant and minority groups. Community Navigators can help newcomers overcome barriers such as language, cultural, and lack of access to resources (Callejo & Geer, 2012; Shommu et al., 2016; Zou & Parry, 2016). This

is because their Community Navigators are “trained, culturally perceptive healthcare workers who serve as a link between patients and the healthcare providers in order to reduce healthcare disparities” (Shommu et al., 2016, p.2). Community Navigators are also trusted educators who relay messages to the community and may be looked up to for guidance (Callejo & Geer, 2012). Community Navigators have many names such as “Peer Leaders,” (Ahmad, Ferrari, Moravac, Lofter, & Dunn, 2017) “Outreach Workers,” and “Health Advocates,” (Shommu et al., 2016). Canada could address the gaps in access to resources by introducing Community Navigator programs (Zou & Parry, 2016).

## **2.1 Characteristics of a Community Navigator**

The characteristics of Community Navigators are very appealing to newcomers. They ideally speak the same language as the immigrant and refugees and are seen as trustworthy members of the newcomers’ community (Callejo & Geer, 2012). The literature identified common characteristics that organizations may look for when choosing Community Navigators. They are typically caring individuals, prior immigrants, and culturally competent. Additional favorable attributes include public speaking ability, the ability to work as a team, and critical problem-solving skills (Ahmad et al., 2017).

### **2.1.1 Caring**

A caring personality is one characteristic that effective Community Navigators have in common. Callejo and Geer (2012) conducted a study with 19 key informant interviews with community members, health care providers,

fish-selling businesses, and a religious practitioner to gather information on culturally sensitive methods of educating the urban immigrant community in Brooklyn on the hazards of prenatal mercury exposure. Callejo and Geer (2012) determined that a positive way of disseminating information is through people who care for the community; particularly those who immigrants can look up to, relate to, and trust for guidance. They can effectively distribute information as people feel their message is more powerful (Callejo & Geer, 2012). In 2013, Ahmad et al. (2017) conducted a study in Toronto, Canada using three focus groups with 14 peer leaders to explore their experiences. Situational maps and analysis were used to explore the peer leaders' experiences and the underlying aspects of what it means to be a peer leader (Ahmad et al., 2017). Ahmad et al. (2017) determined that peer leaders frame their experiences around the concept of helping and caring for both individuals and the community (Ahmad et al., 2017). Additionally, Ahmad et al. (2017) determined that when Community Navigators help others, it improved their self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-awareness, ultimately allowing them to become superior leaders and feel a greater sense of control over their community's well-being.

### ***2.1.2 Prior Immigrants***

Based on the evidence from Zou and Parry's (2016) review, when Community Navigators are from an immigrant's own ethnic community, immigrants can overcome barriers when accessing information and healthcare

more easily. As Woodgate et al. (2017) gathered information on African immigrant and refugee families living in Manitoba, one theme emerged regarding accessing care; “Let’s buddy up to improve access” (p.4/13). Prior immigrant and refugee families who participated in the qualitative study felt comfortable using their social network to access resources (Woodgate et al., 2017). Though the study conducted by Woodgate et al. (2017) is specific to the African community, they note that like-minded families can form networks to support new immigrant and refugee families. Newcomer families felt older immigrant and refugee families would be able to connect well with them (Woodgate et al., 2017). No information is noted in their study regarding whether or not prior immigrant and refugee families would be interested in helping new families (Woodgate et al., 2017). Ahmed et al. (2017) determined that recent immigrants and those who self-identify as an ethno-racial minority are important characteristics to look for when selecting peer leaders. Several participants believed their peer leader work was beneficial in redefining their professional/social position or identity (Ahmad et al., 2017). Both peer leaders and participants benefit from the program as a result of being an immigrant and part of an ethno-racial minority group (Ahmad et al., 2017). Being a peer leader offers individuals an opportunity to identify their strengths, gain Canadian work experience, improve their professional status, and develop formal and informal networks (Ahmad et al., 2017). Wang and Handy (2013) determined that the likelihood of immigrant participation depends on personal resources, social resources, and other individual characteristics such as

health, age, and gender. For instance, females, those with excellent health status, formal education, higher income, and those with school aged children, were more likely to participate in volunteering activities in Canada (Wang & Handy, 2013). Therefore, these characteristics may be considered to determine who would be more likely to volunteer (Wang & Handy, 2013).

### ***2.1.3 Culturally Competent***

King-Shier, Lau, Fung, LeBlanc & Johal (2018) completed a qualitative study with 52 participants of different ethnocultural groups in Calgary, to determine where and how South Asian and Chinese individuals prefer to receive healthcare information, compared to that of Caucasians. They determined that ethnic beliefs are often different in the dominant host countries, and South Asian and Chinese participants prefer receiving information pertaining to their ethnic group specifically (King-Shier et al., 2018). For example, some wanted information that covered cultural dietary restrictions (King-Shier et al., 2018). In another study by Todd & Hoffman-Goetz (2011), 50 English-as-second-language individuals participated in semi-structured interviews regarding barriers experienced when seeking cancer information and strategies to minimize them. They found there was a preference for interpersonal sources of health information and a strong reliance on physicians, friends, and family, which may be rooted in interpersonal cultural values (Todd & Hoffman-Goetz, 2011). Zou and Parry (2012) and Ahmad et al. (2017) agree that navigators should be culturally and linguistically sensitive,

and accepted by community members. Interprofessional skills are also an asset for Community Navigators, as they interact with the public (Zou & Parry, 2012). In addition, the results emphasized the need for information that “reinforces cultural norms, language familiarity, and other values specific to cultural identities, such as interpersonally oriented values” (Todd & Hoffman-Goetz, 2011, p.333).

## **2.2 Planning for Navigators: Training & Organization**

Community Navigators chosen during recruitment should be caring, culturally competent, and ideally prior immigrants. Recruitment strategies were rarely discussed in the literature, but Ahmad et al. (2017) initially used targeted community advertising to find individuals. They later used written applications and interviews to determine who would become a peer leader (Ahmad et al., 2017). The type of community advertising and response was not mentioned in Ahmad et al.’s (2017) report. Other articles did not expand on the initial recruitment process, exposing a gap in this section of literature. However, several articles detailed the next steps of recruitment, such as responsibilities and training.

Each article discussed a different set of Community Navigator responsibilities and training depending on the Community Navigators’ purpose. Responsibilities may include giving presentations to the community, facilitating group discussions, and calling individuals for follow-up (Ahmad et al., 2017; Shommu et al., 2016). In addition, the Community Navigators’ roles in Shommu et al.’s (2016) study included

self-care training, distribution of educational materials, other forms of post-teaching monitoring (such as home visits), and facilitation of support groups. Both articles stressed the need for training, whether it be three-day training sessions, training packages, group sessions, or workshops (Ahmad et al., 2017; Shommu, 2012). The goals of training is for Community Navigators to feel confident functioning independently, but also feel supported by having access to professional mentors and organizational partnerships if they require assistance (Ahmad et al., 2017; Callejo & Geer, 2012; Shommu et al., 2016; Zou & Parry, 2012).

The organization of partnerships and mentors for any type of program must come from a higher organizational level of the host society (Kazemipur, 2012; Majka & Longazel, 2017). Majka & Longazel (2017) wrote a report discussing the “Welcome Dayton Plan,” located in Dayton, Ohio. The “Welcome Dayton Plan” outlines goals and recommendations for the city of Dayton to uphold, ensuring it is a more immigrant friendly city, by eliminating language barriers when accessing services (Majka & Longazel, 2017). Majka & Longazel (2017) note that changes must be made at an institutional level, including hiring a coordinator and reducing language barriers. Kazemipur (2012), Majka & Longazel (2017), and Shommu et al. (2016), agree that the city and organizations must be active to implement the outreach initiative successfully.

### 3. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Media is a beneficial way to reach immigrants but must be initiated by the city in collaboration with local organizations (Majka & Longazel, 2017). A variety of technology and media formats can be utilized to reach the immigrant population including (but not limited to) mail, newspaper, television, and radio (Callejo & Geer, 2012). Certain factors must be considered prior to reaching out to immigrants. For example, it is important to consider which types of media are the most effective and which locations will provide the most exposure (Andrade et al., 2018; Callejo & Geer, 2012; Zou & Parry, 2012). According to Callejo & Geer (2012), language barriers must be addressed when reaching out to immigrants. Effective measures include multilingual outreach fact sheets, brochures and posters in locations of related interest, press releases, and collaborating with local stores (Callejo & Geer, 2012). These measures are effective as they address language barriers and increase the exposure and likeliness of retaining information (Callejo & Geer, 2012). In addition, Andrade et al. (2018) conducted a formative research study regarding social marketing campaigns, branding, and digital media among Latino youth immigrants. They used interviews and focus groups to receive feedback about engagement strategies (Andrade et al., 2018). Their findings concluded that effective ways of engagement include using media in waiting areas via posters or television at clinics, bus stops, hair salons, and faith-based organizations (Andrade et al., 2018). Callejo & Geer (2012) note that advertisements must be culturally appropriate, include racially relevant images, contain text in immigrants' appropriate languages, and use simple terminology. This allows the widest possible audience to be reached (Callejo & Geer, 2012).

### 3.1 Cultural Influences

Culture is a socially constructed term which includes elements such as language, values, and social norms that distinguish one group of people from another (King-Shier et al., 2018). How information is conveyed is extremely important when working with individuals of non-dominant ethnocultural affiliations (King-Shier et al., 2018). The development of effective education campaigns requires a thorough understanding of the social and environmental characteristics of the target community (Woodall et al., 2009). According to Statistics Canada (2016), the top three recent immigrant groups arriving to Vancouver are Chinese, South Asian, and Filipino immigrants respectively. Although current published literature is limited, informant interviews can better inform the writers of effective ways to reach Chinese, South Asian, and Filipino immigrants.

#### 3.1.1 Chinese

Woodall et al. (2009) conducted a population-based survey of Chinese immigrants in Vancouver and Seattle with 899 individuals to identify Chinese immigrants' sources of health information. Woodall et al. (2009) determined that it is important to note the distinction between making health information available and making it accessible to Chinese immigrants. Although there is a magnitude of information regarding health available, evidence suggests that many immigrants are not able to access, understand, and apply this information (Woodall et al., 2009). Over half of the Chinese immigrants in Woodall et al.'s (2009) study reported that Chinese language newspapers,

Chinese language television, friends, and health care providers were used to access information, while only a minority used the internet (Woodall et al., 2009). Similarly, Todd & Hoffman-Goetz (2011) determined that Chinese immigrant women may not view the internet as a reliable information source because they rely on person to person contact for information sharing. Woodall et al. (2009) found there were significant differences in which media sources were used for health information in Vancouver and Seattle. Vancouver residents reported receiving more information from Chinese language television, newspapers, and radio (Woodall et al., 2009). This may be a result of the greater availability of Chinese language media in Vancouver (Woodall et al., 2009). One barrier noted by King Shier et al.'s (2018) was that it can be very challenging for Chinese immigrants to find the right dialect on Chinese language television and radio stations. Chinese immigrants however, appreciated when these resources were available (King Shier et al., 2018). King Shier et al. (2018) noted that one way of making information more accessible to Chinese immigrants is to advertise at seniors or cultural centres and not places of worship. Chinese people typically go to places they know, making seniors or cultural centres ideal locations as they are generally central and convenient (King Shier et al., 2018). Another important factor to consider among the Chinese population is the presence of various subgroups. Tanaka, Strong, Lee, and Juon (2013) used baseline survey data collected by the Maryland Asian American Liver Cancer Education Program which used a cluster randomized trial design to test the effectiveness of a hepatitis

B/liver cancer educational program on HBV screening among at-risk Asian immigrants. The study examines how various information sources relate to HBV knowledge and screening (Tanaka et al., 2013). The results determined that significant differences exist among Asian subgroups regarding common information sources (Tanaka et al., 2013).

### **3.1.2 South Asian**

South Asian immigrants are similar to Chinese immigrants in how they prefer to receive information (King-Shier et al., 2018). South Asian immigrants prefer to have information in their own language, particularly on matters relating to them specifically (King-Shier et al., 2018). Additionally, these immigrants appreciate when media is used, as information is often offered in their own languages (King-Shier et al., 2018). Similar to Chinese immigrants, South Asian immigrants prefer to receive information from free newspapers, television, and radio (King-Shier et al., 2018). When listening to the radio, the South Asian participants in King-Shier et al.'s (2018) study spoke of their interest in listening to guest speakers on Punjabi radio stations. In contrast to the Chinese population, South Asians believe the Gurdwara or Mosque is a good place to receive information as these locations are easily accessible (King-Shier et al., 2018).

### **3.1.3 Filipino**

The writers did not find any literature containing information targeting the Filipino community.

# Review of Recent Immigrant and Refugee Campaigns

## 4. METHODS

In order to investigate challenges and methods for a Tell-A-Friend campaign, the writers conducted interviews with seven informants who were involved in recent immigrant and refugee campaigns. See informant information in Table 1. Verbal consent was obtained and interviews were approximately 30 minutes long. The writers documented important statements and notes during the interviews. The writers asked the following questions:

- How is your organization currently connecting with immigrants and refugees?
- What barriers have you noticed?
- What can be done to minimize these barriers?
- Have you or your organization completed any campaigns in the past five years to reach immigrants/refugees? What was the framework for this design?
- Do you have any long-term residents who volunteer for your organization?
- What are the particular characteristics of people who want to help? Are there any trends you have noticed? If so what are they?
- Are you familiar with community outreach to any specific cultural group? For instance, Chinese, South Asian, Filipino.

Following the interviews, data was analyzed by organizing the texts under each

category and searching for themes. Themes emerged when informants provided repetitive responses which were then confirmed by the project coordinators. The writers did a member check with the informants regarding their findings. Three themes that emerged are: immigrant and refugee challenges, outreach solutions, and the use of Community Navigators. The writers also found five sub-themes within the immigrant and refugees challenges theme: language barriers, accessibility of information, lack of transportation, lack of childcare support, and cultural barriers. Three sub-themes were found within the outreach solutions theme: use of media, WeChat, and partnerships with businesses, community organizations, and others. The writers found three sub-themes within the use of Community Navigators theme: recruitment, characteristics, and training.

## **5. IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE CHALLENGES**

### **5.1 Language Barriers**

Similar to the literature findings, language barriers were identified as a significant challenge for the immigrant and refugee population. In Vancouver, many written and interpersonal resources are in English which is challenging for newcomers.

According to F. Heng, “the system is very anglocentric in terms of information [distribution]” (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018). The writers also personally inquired at the YVR airport regarding which pamphlets are given to newcomers. The Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) published the

“Welcome to Canada, What You Should Know” resource, however, it is only available in English and French. With the largest newcomer populations coming from China, South Asia, and the Philippines, these individuals are unable to use this resource unless they inquire further. According to Z. Esmail, “programs [and resources] should be provided in their language” (Z. Esmail, personal communication, June 21, 2018). This is of high importance for Vancouver as “language is one way that can make people feel safe” (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018). It allows people to “feel included but you still have to push to get them involved” (H. Peterson, personal communication, June 20, 2018). The importance of language must be acknowledged when planning how to improve newcomers’ access to information regarding settlement services. This is because “language provides [individuals] confidence to navigate the system” (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018).

The extent of the language barriers are often dependent on the age of the immigrant or refugee. According to S. Kim “there is a generational change occurring, where the younger generations know how to speak both languages” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). While the younger immigrant and refugee population are more likely to be bilingual, this is not the case for the older adult population. As a result of being unable to speak English, “elders are then isolated and stuck at home” resulting in them feeling completely isolated (Z. Esmail, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Presently, “children’s roles and

adult's roles have become switched because seniors don't speak the language" (Z. Esmail, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Unfortunately, this results in children taking control and becoming the primary decision makers. However, it is "not just about language anymore - it goes deeper than just translating something" (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018).

## **5.2 Accessibility of Information**

Language barriers are not the only limitation that exists when accessing information. Lack of childcare, transportation, and the initial contact with immigrants are also problematic. The informant data has noted several reasons why there could be a lack of access to settlement services. Some immigrants do not know where to access information, while others attempt to access information but are unable to.

Ideally, all immigrants and refugees would be given enough resources or references when they first land in Canada. However, F. Heng, who immigrated to Canada several years ago, stated "no one ever told me about these resources [when I first arrived]" (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Currently, Canada "just give[s] a pamphlet" F. Heng elaborated. Individuals may not access information because they do not know there is information available. Ideally, it would most effective to target immigrants and refugees when they initially land in Canada (for example at the airport), to reduce the number of newcomers overlooked.

### **5.3 Lack of Transportation**

For newcomers who know settlement services exist, a major limitation for the older generation is a lack of transportation. Unfortunately, “many people don’t know that transportation can be provided” (Z. Esmail, personal communication, June 21, 2018). According to S. Koehn, “it is important for people to be able to get [to services]” (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Newcomers may be unable to access services or programs if transportation is unavailable to them (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018).

### **5.4 Lack of Childcare Support**

The limited availability of childcare support services is a major barrier for newcomers when they attempt to access settlement services. Newcomers may be aware of the services, however, the challenge occurs when they are trying to access it. Z. Esmail elaborates on this, stating “if childcare can be provided, there will be increased accessibility of service use” (Z. Esmail, personal communication, June 21, 2018). S. Koehn also noted that individuals who take care of children would not be able to access services or programs during school pick up times (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Therefore, a lack of childcare may prevent parents and caregivers from accessing settlement services.

### **5.5 Cultural Barriers**

Although language barriers are often recognized as a challenge for new immigrants and refugees, cultural considerations are often neglected. Immigrants’ and refugees’ individual cultures must be explored and acknowledged. When

newcomers come to Vancouver, the host country must provide them with information in a culturally sensitive manner. In order “to connect people, language, and culture, they need to find a way to connect these things, not create a melting pot.” (H. Peterson, personal communication, June 20, 2018). In doing so, everyone’s heritage will be respected.

### **5.5.1 Chinese**

The Chinese population of Vancouver contains a wide variety of subgroups that must be addressed individually. In addition, Chinese subgroups have specific languages which “vary according to [their] age” (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018). This population is often grouped into one category, although each subgroup has individual characteristics. For example, F. Heng spoke with various individuals, one of whom informed them that the Hong Kong subgroup in particular is often “tired of interacting” when they get to Vancouver (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018). In Hong Kong, “they don’t have a choice but to interact because it’s so busy” (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018). When they come to Vancouver, they feel they now have “space to breathe” and it is not uncommon to hear them say they “need space” (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Often “as [Chinese immigrants] age they tend to withdraw” simply because they want to enjoy their “quiet lifestyle as it allows them space to breathe” (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018).

### **5.5.2 Punjabi**

Barriers that limit Punjabi immigrants from accessing information often revolve around the concept of family, as the involvement and roles of family members are pivotal. There is often “lots of chain migration, especially [among] older women” (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018) as families frequently follow one another into a host country. S. Koehn notes that compared to other cultures and depending on their occupation in their home country, Punjabi immigrants may not be “nearly as literate in their own language” (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Therefore, one way to address this is to have “resources in English so the grandchildren can translate” (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018). This creates a change in the traditional power dynamic, as now the younger are teaching the older. The older generations may have immigrated with the purpose of “caring for the family” so they often feel burdened with the “responsibility to look after family” (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018). As they are family-centered, women and older adults often “can’t go out to services because they have to help their family” and are therefore “in fewer programs since men get out more” (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018). An ideal outreach solution for the Punjabi community is to promote the use of settlement services as an opportunity to help their family (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018; Z. Esmail, personal communication, June 21, 2018).

## 6. OUTREACH SOLUTIONS

After obtaining information from informants regarding the various challenges newcomers face, they were asked to discuss outreach opportunities and their viability. It became evident that all outreach methods must “be based on an assessment of [the target] population, since each population needs to be approached individually” (J. Pabillano, personal communication, June 20, 2018). In addition, when planning an outreach project, the “initial planning of the media and marketing cannot be an afterthought” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). These statements must be kept in mind as the writers discuss wide-broadcasted, indirect, and direct methods of outreach solutions.

### 6.1 Use of Media

S. Kim notes that “to empower a community, [one must] focus on ideas of identity” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Utilizing media (such as posters, advertising at bus stops, and social media) to increase access to settlement services is essential, as we must “figure out how to empower [immigrants/refugees]” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Aspects such as identity, generational influence, and community empowerment are all affected by culture. Every cultural group also has sub-cultures, for example, “Chinese” can be further divided into Taiwanese, Cantonese, and many others. Therefore, before initiating any type of wide-broadcasted media, campaign planners “need to complete a community assessment before thinking about media promotion” (J. Pabillano, personal communication, June 20, 2018).

### **6.1.1 WeChat**

Specifically for the Chinese population located in Richmond, “WeChat is an effective media platform for settlement service advertising” and is “the best [outreach method] for the Chinese community” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). WeChat is an app in which participants communicate through written Chinese characters to discuss any topic; groups of up to 500 individuals can be formed. A sign-up QR code and settlement service information can be advertised easily on posters located in libraries, bus stops, and newspapers (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Challenges with accessibility are minimized with this app, as “WeChat is well known to everyone [including immigrants] in China” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018) and can be downloaded onto any smartphone or computer. A. Leung further notes that since the written form of the Chinese language is universal among all dialects, the challenge of language is reduced as Chinese individuals are often literate in reading their own language (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Individuals determine if “the information they receive is good or bad depending on what others comment. They can ultimately make the decision whether or not to take action on the information they receive” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). WeChat groups may discuss home remedies for sickness, daycare options, and other peer-informed topics. A. Leung added that the administrator of the group has the important role of monitoring the platform, as everyone can

speak freely (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Overall, WeChat and other similar apps such as LINE are known to be good places to promote programs in the Chinese community located in Richmond.

## **6.2 Partnerships with businesses, community organizations, and others**

Though media can be utilized to widely broadcast settlement service information, another option for outreach would be to partner with pre-existing businesses and community organizations. For example, “involving businesses in areas where the community usually interacts,” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018) enables personalized promotion of information. In a community, individuals typically interact with landlords, realtors, people at grocery stores, etc. Therefore, any type of service offered “must meet people where they are at” and information promotion “is about knowing patterns locally and going to reach them” (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Although “connecting indirectly is a good way, lots of people do not want to sit through long meetings at [settlement services]” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Some individuals may attend community information panels held by experts recognized and respected in their fields (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018). These panels would be sponsored by other organizations outside of settlement services, such as universities. Resources, manpower, and cost would then be shared. Finding these other organizations or businesses, and then establishing a non-competitive partnership within settlements services themselves,

are examples of how the lead organization can indirectly bridge the gap between newcomers and settlement services (K. Langlois, personal communication, June 26, 2018; S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018).

### **6.3 Use of Community Navigators**

Partnering with businesses is an effective way of distributing information to the immigrant and refugee population, however you “cannot use only businesses” (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018). For the Chinese population, “WeChat is the most effective way [to reach individuals] as well as direct interaction” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). For other immigrants, to get information out “volunteers need to go out and meet people” (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018). According to J. Pabillano, “generally, word of mouth would be useful” to distribute information (J. Pabillano, personal communication, June 20, 2018). According to F. Heng, a possible strategy to improve information dissemination regarding settlement services would be to sector off the city of Vancouver and have leaders in charge of each sector (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018). The Tell-a-Friend campaign cannot only target Vancouver; it must extend to the federal and provincial government (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). This is “because it has to start prior to arrival” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Many immigrants make arrangements prior to arriving in Canada, therefore informing newcomers of this program prior to their arrival is essential. Additionally, “this does not have to cost a lot” because “you can start with associations that have [improved immigrant access

to information] in their mandate” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). This indicates that using Community Navigators would be an effective way to distribute information regarding settlement services to newcomers. When creating a Community Navigator program “you must have a long-term vision [and] cannot simply think short term” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Most importantly, the “product has to be amazing on its own” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018).

## **7. COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS**

Utilizing Community Navigators for the implementation of a “Tell-a-Friend” campaign is a plausible strategy to increase access to information regarding settlement services in Vancouver. In order for services to be successful, one “must get people involved in discussing services” (S. Koehn, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Although the Community Navigator approach is a plausible solution, it would require detailed planning and collaboration between various organizations. Ideally, when planning any campaign, you “want to make an excellent program, then promote it and let people know about it” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). By doing so, it increases the program’s chance of success, allowing it to be more beneficial to immigrants.

### **7.1 Recruitment**

When recruiting volunteers to become Community Navigators, various strategies can be used. It is important to realize “when recruiting volunteers, they

need to be aware of the purpose” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). There also “needs to be an appeal to engaging with the project” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Recruiting individuals can occur “both by approaching volunteers [personally] and [having] volunteers approach them” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). For instance, according to A. Leung when recruiting individuals for her *Avenues of Change* project, they initially enlisted volunteers by approaching “parents [at the mall] and by receiving referrals from frontline workers” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). As the program grew, they gained more volunteers from “referrals and word of mouth” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). The method of recruitment depends on the type of volunteers you want to attract. For instance, “university students” can be recruited by going to universities and talking to students (K. Langlois, personal communication, June 26, 2018). The “older established groups who want to actually help” should also be contacted by going to senior centres and events (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). In one of the South Vancouver Neighborhood House (SVNH) programs, Z. Esmail mentioned that the “seniors’ hub council is very established” and involved in recruiting volunteers (Z. Esmail, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Therefore, using well-established groups and organizations is an effective recruitment strategy. In addition, posters can also be used for recruitment. For instance, to recruit youth, the SVNH “had a poster inside [the establishment] for youth volunteer recruitment” (Z. Esmail, personal communication, June 21, 2018).

## 7.2 Characteristics

When working with the immigrant population, several characteristics are beneficial for volunteers to have. For large projects and campaigns, “it really helps if everyone believes in the cause [because] it is a uniting factor” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Not only does this “create a higher ideal [but] it is also an inclusion strategy” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Favorable attributes of Community Navigators include those who are outgoing, patient, have public interaction experience, and those who have the time (H. Peterson, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Similarly, Z. Esmail, believes it is important for volunteers to be “trustworthy, kind, and have time, [for instance] seniors” (Z. Esmail, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Retired individuals often “look for things to fill [their] day,” making them good Community Navigator candidates (H. Peterson, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Retired individuals “still want to do things” and “love to be useful” (H. Peterson, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Other individuals that would be good candidates are “retired nurses or teachers” (H. Peterson, personal communication, June 20, 2018). Additionally, it is important to recruit individuals who are “friendly on observation” and “who can actively connect with others” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). To determine this, A. Leung often observes peoples’ participation in group settings before approaching them for recruitment (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). To connect with immigrants, it is also important to have “someone that knows the food, culture, language, etc.” (H.

Peterson, personal communication, June 20, 2018). This allows newcomers to feel more connected to their Community Navigator. It is important for the Community Navigators to be relatable, as F. Heng has spoken with many newcomers and the “only time they felt connected was when they met someone like them” (F. Heng, personal communication, June 20, 2018).

### 7.3 Training

For Community Navigator programs, training is dependent on their role. In order “to have a core group, they must be given responsibilities” (S. Kim, personal communication, June 20, 2018). According to A. Leung, when she arranged training sessions for her *Avenues of Change* project, they went “through what to expect, rules, roles, arranged ongoing training, [and] invited different partners to the training sessions” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018).

When planning training sessions for those who will be working with the immigrant/refugee population, it is important for the leading organization to “educate the volunteers about various cultures” (K. Langlois, personal communication, June 26, 2018). This allows volunteers to better “respect everyone’s differences and norms” (K. Langlois, personal communication, June 26, 2018).

After interviewing various informants, the writers determined that the length of the training is dependent on the volunteer’s role. Z. Esmail stated that the SVNH volunteer education “includes an orientation and 3 training days (2 hours each

day)” (Z. Esmail, personal communication, June 21, 2018). In contrast, when A. Leung ran training for her *Avenues of Change* project, “in the 1st year, [volunteers] did 5 training sessions” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). A. Leung added that it is very important to “survey the attendees afterwards for feedback in order to make improvements” (A. Leung, personal communication, June 21, 2018). Lastly, K. Langlois stated that when he was trained to conduct home visits for refugee families, the volunteers received a “2-hour training session” (K. Langlois, personal communication, June 26, 2018).

## Discussion

The writers gained a comprehensive understanding of current and previous immigrant and refugee campaigns after reviewing published evidence and informant interviews. The writers were then able to identify salient information about improving access to settlement services. Ultimately, the writers have identified several strengths as well as gaps in their findings, which should be considered when planning and implementing a Tell-a-Friend campaign to increase access to settlement services.

### Strengths

The writers discovered three main strengths of using the Tell-a-Friend campaign as a plausible project design to disseminate information in Vancouver. Firstly, a Tell-a-Friend campaign may not cost as much as one may think due to organizational support. Secondly, Tell-a-Friend campaigns currently exist and have been successful in the past. Lastly, a Tell-a-Friend campaign uses passionate individuals to distribute information and many are available in Vancouver.

It is possible to create a cost effective Tell-a-Friend campaign in Vancouver. The evidence from the literature and interview informants provided a significant amount of information which can be used to begin planning a campaign. In order for the campaign to be most successful, collaboration must exist between the lead organization and other organizations and businesses. VIP has already engaged 120 individuals from 73 organizations and groups which are valuable

resources to collaborate with to create this campaign. In addition, Strategy Implementation Teams made up of VIP partners and led by a lead organization, work collectively to implement strategies. VIP recognizes a Tell-a-Friend campaign is a plausible action to increase access to settlement services. Through the informant interviews, the writers have already met many possible “Friends”.

Another strength the writers found is that similar or related initiatives with a “Tell-A-Friend” design have already been implemented and are successful in the Lower Mainland. For example, *Hey Neighbour*, *Avenues of Change*, and *Learning in Action*, have different definitions of “Tell” and “Friend,” but each one effectively disseminates various types of information. The viability of Community Navigator programs described in the literature has also been considered and implemented with success, leading the writers to believe it is a viable campaign design to increase access to settlement services.

An additional strength observed by the writers during the research project was the passion VIP members and other individuals exuded about outreach to immigrant and refugee communities. When interacting with everyone involved in this research project, the writers were very encouraged to find individuals who are already directly or indirectly involved with the newcomer immigrant and refugee population. From direct involvement and coordination of programs to evidence-based research and marketing feedback, the writers have never met a group of individuals so dedicated, hardworking, and brave.

## Gaps

The writers identified three main gaps regarding how immigrants are provided with information. Firstly, current interactions are language-barrier focused and not culture-barrier focused. Secondly, the writers have identified a discrepancy regarding the best ways to disseminate information to newcomers. Lastly, barriers can be encountered when using prior immigrants to disseminate information.

At present, society is very focused on tending to language barriers when interacting with immigrants. The writers have learned that language is just one important part an immigrant's culture. Acknowledging one's culture and providing culturally appropriate care involves more than simply translating information. Most importantly, when disseminating information to immigrants it must be provided by culturally sensitive people. It is helpful for these individuals to be trained and educated about various cultures. In addition, the media utilized must be customized for each individual culture. Campaigns cannot lump all cultures together and expect that the information will be effectively distributed. Cultures must be individually identified from the beginning and ways to inform each group must be established.

Presently, there are various ways to disseminate information to newcomers. Both the literature and interview findings have identified several ways to do so, however there are some discrepancies. Some of the literature was less current which may have resulted in this discrepancy. The major findings from the

writers' literature search indicated that the best way to distribute information to newcomers is in the form of newspapers, radio, television, and through person to person interaction. In contrast, many informants mentioned that utilizing WeChat, LINE, various social media methods, and different marketing strategies is the best way.

The writers learned that a beneficial way to reach newcomers is by having previous immigrants interact with them. However, this approach has several gaps which must be addressed prior to implementation. This includes inspiring previous immigrants to volunteer and recruiting the first set of Community Navigators for a Tell-a-Friend campaign. The writers found that new immigrants are drawn to trustworthy people similar to them, such as prior immigrants however, sometimes prior immigrants feel that because they were not helped when they first arrived, other newcomers are strong enough to navigate independently. For this reason, it can become challenging to recruit the first set of Community Navigators to become mentors for newcomers. With a plausible implementation of a Community Navigator program, the writers hope immigrants who had previously been mentored by a Community Navigator would later become one themselves.

## Recommendations

After reviewing the current literature and conducting seven interviews, the writers have several recommendations for VIP to consider. With the ultimate goal of increasing access to settlement services by utilizing a Tell-a-Friend campaign, the writers have identified plausible actions that may be viable to pursue in the future.

When designing a Tell-a-Friend campaign, the various cultures in Vancouver would benefit from being researched thoroughly, as individuals in each culture interact differently with one another. The writers recommend completing a community needs assessment and marketing research prior to finalizing a design plan in order to address each newcomer in their respective culture. In particular, the writers were unable to obtain information regarding the Filipino community, which Statistics Canada (2016) found to be the third largest cultural group immigrating to Vancouver.

In order to create a sustainable and diverse program, the writers recommend that the initiating organization for the Tell-a-Friend campaign partner with pre-existing organizations as a more indirect method of distributing information. In addition, it must be determined whether settlement services can accommodate an increase in newcomers if the Tell-a-Friend campaign increases the number of individuals using their services.

One form of a Tell-a-Friend campaign the writers recommend is the creation of a Community Navigator program. During the recruitment phase, the initiating organization would “Tell” residents about the program in order to find willing volunteers. The “Friend”

in this design would be the Community Navigator, who would then “Tell” immigrants and refugees about settlement services. See Figure 1 for a pictorial representation.

These Community Navigators would be well versed in the culture of those they are connecting with. Further research regarding the organization of this option is required, such as recruitment, training, and how Community Navigators will connect with immigrants. Options include partnering with pre-existing organizations, universities, and seniors centres who are interested in a long-term solution and investment. The initiating organization may also seek out “Friends” who immigrants and refugees may see and trust on a regular basis, such as store owners, realtors, hairdressers, and landlords. In order to make this program more sustainable, the writers recommend implementing a long-term solution, which would recruit former program participants to later volunteer as Community Navigators.

**Figure 1.** Community Navigator Design Recommendation



\* Vancouver Immigration Partnership

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**TABLE 1: Informant Table**

Name	Organization	Role
Francis Heng	City of Vancouver	Program Coordinator, Hey Neighbour campaign
Harry Peterson	City of Vancouver	Resident Animator, Hey Neighbour campaign
Steve Kim	Boilingpoint Group	President of full service marketing communications company
Jhenifer Pabillano	City of Vancouver	Communications Manager
Sharon Koehn	Simon Fraser University	Clinical Research Professor and Chair of the Department of Gerontology
Zahra Esmail	South Vancouver Neighborhood House	Executive Director
Annie Leung	Touchstone Family Association	Community Engagement Coordinator
Kory Langlois	Immigrant Services Society of BC	Practicum Student, Learning in Action for Newcomers to Canada