



Social Return On Investment (SROI) Case Study: Calgary's Senior Resource Society Investing to strengthen society

Fast Facts

The Calgary Seniors' Resource Society (CSRS) is a registered non-profit charity that provides essential services and support to seniors. Efforts are focused on low-income, isolated and vulnerable seniors in our communities.

Subject of SROI: CSRS Outreach Services are provided by outreach workers and a team of provincially registered social workers who work to identify, connect with and support low-income, isolated and vulnerable seniors in our communities.

Local Funders: The Calgary Foundation, FCSS, First Calgary Savings, TransCanada, United Way Calgary

By the Numbers (2007):

- 5,451 individuals served through CSRS outreach services
- 4,309 responses to requests for information
- 474 referrals from hospitals & doctors regarding seniors with needs who are otherwise alone
- 668 individual cases managed, 65% over the long term
- 1,099 requests of assistance made directly by clients
- 1,353 inter-agency referrals made
- 7,605 hours of client service hours provided

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“They say there are angels among us ~ and I add you to my growing list of those who have assisted me in my time of need.”

- Mary (73 years old), Outreach Client

Background

The Calgary Seniors' Resource Society (CSRS) is a registered non-profit charity that works to enhance the independence, quality of life and human dignity of seniors in Calgary. CSRS provides home services and community-based programs to connect seniors to people and resources that contribute to their ongoing independence and quality of life.

The outreach program is a central part of CSRS' work. The CSRS outreach team is made up of provincially-registered social workers skilled at identifying, connecting with and supporting low-income, isolated and vulnerable seniors in Calgary.

Through CSRS outreach, seniors access the information, encouragement and support they require to make positive choices, take action and enhance their quality of life. The result enables seniors to maintain their personal dignity and supports their ongoing independence.

Social Value Created

CSRS' outreach workers provides support to seniors in Calgary in a variety of

important ways. Outreach activities range from ensuring that seniors are informed on their eligibility, so that they do receive the

pension, range of benefits and access to publicly-funded home-based services as necessary. CSRS outreach support also extends to emotional and complicated issues such as resolving situations relating to elder abuse and dealing with elder suicide.

Low-income, isolated and vulnerable seniors who are

engaged by the CSRS outreach team are much more likely to be able to manage their personal circumstances, therefore to avoid the likelihood of being involved in crisis situations that do result when seniors are isolated, impoverished and living in poor health.

The support offered by CSRS outreach workers means the seniors engaged in the outreach program are significantly less likely to require a crisis intervention. They are also more likely to avoid needing emergency medical care and other services offered in response to a crisis.

CSRS Outreach services aim to keep seniors in their homes as long as possible.

Theory of Change
If low-income, isolated and vulnerable seniors are connected to needed resources and available support services that support them to make positive choices, they are much more likely to live healthy, dignified and independent lives while remaining in their own communities.

Funding provided by:



Learning with:



SROI Facilitated Learning Group (07-08)

Convened by:



For those no longer able to live independently, CSRS outreach assists them to experience transition in a comfortable and appropriate manner. In 2007, the CSRS outreach team worked toward this important goal with **668** long term clients.

Outreach Services Client Profile

70% of CSRS outreach clients are at least 70 years of age. 70% are female. Many receive Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) income support. CSRS clients are typically living on very low-incomes, are vulnerable, and are isolated from other support networks.

Generally speaking, CSRS clients fall into two broad profiles. The first is a senior who is home-based, isolated and limited in mobility. He or she lives on a low income and tends to be malnourished and unhealthy. They are often suicidal. 65% of CSRS clients fall into this category. They often become clients after being referred by a hospital because they have no local support at the time of discharge after a period of illness.

One real example would be an 81 year-old widow with no children. She suffers from macular degeneration and is

legally blind. She is severely arthritic and lives below the low income cut off of \$16,350/year. Her neighbourhood does not offer a grocery store within walking distance, or adequate public transportation. She is malnourished. This contributes to her depression and increasingly poor health.

The potential consequences of not engaging with this senior are quite severe. If left isolated, she may die in isolation and remain undiscovered in her home for quite some time.

The second profile of a CSRS outreach client is of a senior who is still functional and living independently, yet is living on the edge of the low income cut off (LICO). This renders them extremely vulnerable to any unexpected bills or expenses, or any sudden changes in their personal circumstances.

Changes such as a death of a spouse, an unanticipated medical condition, a sudden financial demand can suddenly change the affordability of their own home. In this case, they must choose to sacrifice basic necessities such as nutritious food, even regular meals. These unexpected changes increase their vulnerability and are destabilizing.

Calculating the SROI of Calgary Senior Resources Services' Outreach Program

Social value is created by CSRS Outreach Workers each time a senior's situation is stabilized and they avoid experiencing crisis.

In 2007, at least 668 CSRS clients would otherwise have had at least one emergency incident involving the police, had it not been for the engagement of a CSRS outreach worker. For 75% of the total group of 668 clients, an emergency response, transportation and admittance to a hospital emergency unit, examination by a doctor and a three-day hospital stay would have been the likely result.

Another possible outcome for many CSRS clients would be a psychiatric admission to hospital. When this occurs, the average stay is 65 days. Often, the senior will not have friends and family to support their transition back to living independently in their own homes.

Social value is also created via CSRS' ability to mobilize volunteer resources. In 2007, CSRS volunteers drove 1.5

million kilometers as they provided 1,954, free, round-trip transportation to low-income seniors. This transport would have enabled CSRS clients to access to medical, support and personal services (such as shopping for groceries), which would have otherwise cost each individual \$10, and the province of Alberta \$50, each and every return trip. In reality, many of the seniors who did access this free transportation service would have forgone the service had they been required to pay. For most CSRS clients, living without free transportation is likely to result in a crisis situation.

CSRS Outreach workers often assist seniors to submit tax returns. Without submitting an annual tax return Canadians are unable to access income support.

While outreach workers may discover opportunities for seniors to claim additional housing subsidies and other social benefits, accessing maximum benefits while able to

The CSRS Outreach program is supported by:



live at home will always be a less expensive proposition for the province. The alternative is housing a senior within an assisted living facility.

As an example, CSRS outreach workers assisted 80% of the total client group of 668 to access two hours a week of provincially-funded home care support (such as cooking & cleaning— see line 8) and two hours of subsidized home services support (such as nursing & physiotherapy—see line 9) in 2007.

As illustrated in **Table 1.**, both are cited as an increased cost to the province. Yet the combined total of both costs (\$4,259,476) is only slightly more (\$250,000) than the savings to the province that result from providing an individual housing subsidy rather than housing that same group of 668 seniors within an assisted living facility (i.e. \$4,008,000).

In addition, the increased cost of providing home care and services support (\$251,475) is also significantly less expensive than providing the police services, EMS support, hospital stays, transportation and other services that would be required if CSRS was not working with the 668 clients profiled in this case study. This is outlined in **Table 1**, lines 1-6.

Combined, the social value created from supporting vulnerable seniors by connecting them to resources and assisting them to live independently is **\$1,524,506 annually**. Based upon an investment of **\$430,000** per year, CSRS creates **\$3.55** in social value for every **\$1** invested.

Conclusion

As the CSRS outreach program is essentially crisis prevention, the program's SROI has not been projected into future years, only on an annual basis.

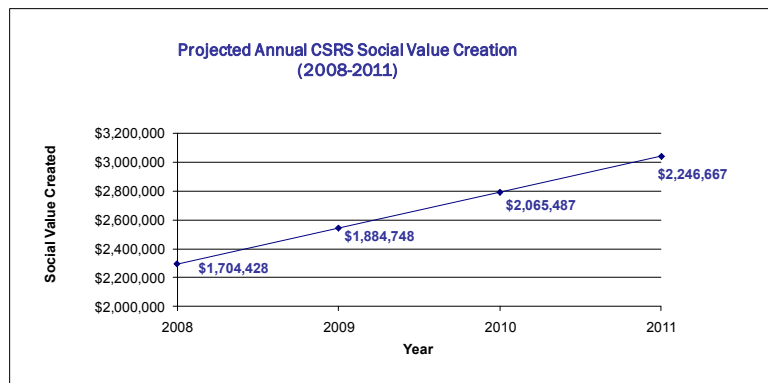
However, when provincial and national statistics are referenced, the Calgary Seniors Resource Society estimates that its client group will grow by 85 seniors annually, over each of the next five years.

Based upon the information presented in this case study, CSRS estimates its potential to create social value will grow to more than \$2.2 million annually, by the end of 2011 (See **Graph 1**).

Table 1: Social Value Created Annually

Social Value Created Annually - 668 clients			
SROI Indicators	Indicator Code	Total Value YR 1	Notes
1	Police calls (avoided)	\$228,456	\$342/call * 668 avoided per year
2	EMS calls (leading to emergency review and care by Dr.)	\$171,342	75% of 668 avoided per year @ \$342
3	Admission to Emergency	\$115,731	75% of 668 avoided per year @ \$231/visit
4	Hospital Stay - 3 days	\$751,500	668 (75%) avoided per year (\$1,500 per stay)
5	Psychiatric admission for seniors	\$13,641	assumed at least one avoided - average hospital stay 16.9 days
6	Free Transportation (individual)	\$19,540	1954 round trips* 10 ea.
7	Free Transportation (public)	\$97,700	1954 round trip subsidy * 50 ea.
8	Tax Services	\$42,375	\$75 average cost H&R Block 565 clients served in 07
9	Difference in housing subsidies received (2880 vs 8800)	\$4,008,000	Stay in home - assume all have no deductions/income
8	Home Care Support (cooking, cleaning, light housework) 80% of 668 @ max cost (\$52hr)	-\$2,797,776	668 * 80% of GROUP, accessing 2hrs/wk, 52 wks/yr @ \$50.34/hr
10	Home Services Support (nursing, physio) 80% @ subsidized cost	-\$1,126,002	668 * 80% of GROUP access 2hrs/wk, 52 wks/yr @ \$20.26/hr
SROI Summary & Ratio			
A	Social Value Created (for 5 years)	\$1,524,506	Total of above
B	Total CSRS Investment in Outreach	\$429,844	Inflation rate: 12%
C	CSRS investment per individual	\$643	Assuming 85 new clients per year.
D	Social Return on Investment (SROI) Indicator	3.55	

Graph 1: Projected Social Value Created through CSRS ('08-'11)



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