

L.I.F.E. REVIEW FOCUS GROUP

Community: Esquimalt, January 2019

AUDIENCE/LENS: Discussion with Reception Staff & Organization Rep who completed L.I.F.E. Applications on behalf of clients.

What is working well with the L.I.F.E. program?

- Variety of products available.
- The program is inclusive.
- A clear and comprehensive administrative system, for example:
 - frontline staff can approve complete applications on the spot
 - when taxes are not received clients, may submit an adjudicator form – ONCE. This is noted on their account in the case. Note: Esquimalt offers a free tax service so there is no barrier for clients to not submit their taxes in the future. Participants feel this empowers clients and supports them with a true “hand up” meeting their obligations to file taxes.

What are the main challenges or barriers of the life program?

- Maintaining effective regional communication.
- A client can receive 104 admissions as opposed to the 52 - this is a fault in the system and can create conflicts for frontline staff. Specifically this occurs when client can scan their passes OR check off the background admissions on their passes. By ensuring persons only do one of the other, this would be resolved.

What changes or possibilities should be considered for the future of the life program?

- **Income thresholds:**
 - using national statistics is inaccurate for the cost of living in greater Victoria
 - The current method is to use the national standards +3%.
 - i. SUGGESTION: to verify the accuracy of this is to cross reference the income thresholds with the regional living wage.
- **Administrative Process:**
- Adjudicator & Service Support Organization Reports: organizations submit forms on behalf of dozens of applicants in order to receive a free admission to the centre; however, attending the Centre for the client is often intermittently successful. In this case the application process was extremely cumbersome for both the client submitting the form and the recreation centre processing form for a single admission. Discussion on solutions, yielded:
 - SUGGESTION: Are other third-party groups experiencing the same? Is this worth exploring further?
 - A potential SOLUTION would be for these third-party groups to apply for an organization life pass so they could then use the pass to see if attending recreation centre is the right fit for their clients. From there, if successful the organization could apply for an individual life pass for the respective client.
- **Advertising:**
- Strong hesitation and reservation to promote the life program as a whole until the regional communication is more streamlined in particular with behavioural issues being more promptly remedied.

- **Product:**
- Consider product expansion where 100% of costs are we covered.
 - Example: birthday parties are not currently eligible for a discount up to \$50; can they be included? This may assist with selling out birthday parties during low booking periods.
 - FURTHER DISCUSSION: It is recognized that during peak times our birthday parties do sell out so there could be a potential revenue loss.
 - SOLUTION: A quick evaluation of fiscal responsibility may be valuable. A simple calculation would be: comparison of birthday parties booked at the \$50 less vs all birthday parties booked at the full rate? This would be the absolute widest range possible and indicate an exaggerated expense or revenue loss.
 - OPPORTUNITY: Birthday parties attract multiple children who may not otherwise have access to rec centre OR may have such an enjoyable experience this could be a new way to market to other families.