

## FOREWARD

For some time I have been wanting to capture the story of the development of the community mental health system in Vancouver. It's a story of visionary thinkers, administrators, service providers, clients and family members who, together, created a unique, world-renowned system known as the Greater Vancouver Mental Health Service (GVMHS).

GVMHS pioneered an incredibly wide range of services containing culturally responsive care, focusing on recovery and rehabilitation as its basic principle. It includes initiatives in housing, developing the concurrent disorders of mental health and addiction services, and providing support and direction to related non-profit community agencies and consumer training and art organizations. During its twenty seven years of existence, GVMHS gained international recognition throughout the rest of Canada and United States, and particularly the Pacific Rim Countries where it became known as the "Vancouver Model".

This unique model of truly interdisciplinary involvement (physicians, nurses, social workers, occupational and recreational therapists, artists, addiction counsellors etc.) in services and planning provided a rich legacy which continues to thrive to this present day.

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*Soma Ganesan, MD, FRCPC*

*Clinical Professor, Head & Medical Director,  
Department of Psychiatry Vancouver Acute, Tertiary and Urgent Services  
Director, Cross Cultural Program*