

## **Ralph Buckley Audio 1 Transcription:**

Dr. John Cumming was hired to produce a plan for patients that were being discharged from Riverview Hospital into the Vancouver area. Cumming favoured treating the mentally ill in the community, and in order to prove its viability, he first put together a Home Treatment Team which included a psychiatrist and a small number of nurses. They were assigned to follow patients being discharged from Riverview into the Vancouver area and assist them with finding shelter, arranging for social assistance, providing medication, counselling, and being proactive in helping with any crisis situation they might encounter. Based on the success of this experiment, Cumming produced the Vancouver Plan in 1972. He proposed that a number of Community Care Teams be set up in different areas of Vancouver. Over the next three years, six teams were established: The West End, Strathcona, Mt. Pleasant, Kitsilano, Broadway, and the West Side. These Teams consisted of an administrator (called a co-ordinator), a psychiatrist, a senior mental health worker, and 5 or 6 basic mental health workers, usually psychiatric nurses, social workers, or psychologists. Any person having a serious mental illness would be provided service.

Cumming's Vancouver Plan had a strong humanitarian component to it and at the same time he convincingly argued that the community care teams would significantly reduce health care costs by reducing the long hospitalization of many of the mentally ill and lowering as well the need to renovate and rebuild many of the sixty year old buildings on the Riverview site.