
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

Therapeutic recovery community opens in Greater Victoria

VICTORIA – An innovative therapeutic community is opening its doors to men who have repeat experiences with incarceration, homelessness and addiction.

Our Place Society offers a peer-supported therapeutic recovery community for residents to develop life skills, tackle addictions and receive holistic care.

“This community has come together because of the courageous leadership of so many who said ‘yes’ to treating people with dignity, and ‘yes’ to building and hosting a space that will foster lasting change for people in need for years to come,” said Judy Darcy, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. “I am deeply grateful to everyone who has worked tirelessly to make this happen.”

The facility — a former youth custody centre in View Royal — has been transformed into a therapeutic recovery community space for men with recent experience in the criminal justice system and homelessness. Participants will live on site for up to 24 months with access to culturally appropriate and safe therapeutic recovery programming, including counselling and integration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous healing approaches.

All supports and services will be provided through the professional guidance of a clinical team comprised of a physician, psychiatrist, nurses and clinical counsellors. Our Place Society is partnering with Island Health to enable participants to stay on life-saving medications used to treat their addiction.

All participants will be given the opportunity to develop skills in the areas of construction, woodworking, cooking and other areas. Developing these skills will give residents a stronger sense of purpose while also increasing the opportunity for meaningful employment outside of the recovery community.

Partnerships have been key to making this program available for people in need. The Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions provided \$4.7 million in funding for the recovery-based program, while BC Housing provided a \$310,000 grant for renovations, a \$1/year lease and will cover property taxes for three years. In addition, Island Health is earmarking \$300,000 in annual operating funds to support clinical services.

The Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions will be working closely with Our Place Society on this project to determine the effectiveness and adaptability of the therapeutic recovery community in other parts of the province. The community’s goal is for everyone who completes the program to be in control of their addiction, have a place to live, a job and all the life skills necessary to thrive in the wider community.

Our Place Society is a non-profit organization with extensive knowledge and experience helping people in need in Greater Victoria access mental-health, addiction, housing and social-service supports. It works closely with partner agencies, such as BC Housing, Island Health and other not-for-profit community service agencies.

Quotes:

Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing —

“On the road to recovery, a stable home and a supportive community form the foundation people need to succeed. We are fortunate to have such devoted partners come together for this recovery community, including the Our Place Society, to support people as they work to change their lives.”

Don Evans, executive director, Our Place Society -

“Five years ago, Our Place had a vision of bringing a therapeutic recovery community to the Island. We didn’t know what it would look like, or how we would fund it, or even if it was something the Province would embrace. All we knew is that it was desperately needed. Today, our staff, board, volunteers and supporters are so thrilled to be opening this innovative program that will not only transform individual lives, but our whole community.”

Kathy MacNeil, president and CEO, Island Health —

“The impact of addiction is widespread, affecting individuals, families and whole communities. We know that to respond effectively, we need to work together. Island Health is pleased to partner with Our Place to support people who are living with addictions. Every person is unique, and so is their recovery journey. The therapeutic recovery community will provide a safe place where individuals can be supported when they’re ready to begin their journey of recovery.”

David Screech, mayor, View Royal —

"This new therapeutic recovery community represents a much-needed facility in our region. Homelessness is top of mind for many and we must start dealing with the root causes of homelessness. This community represents a real step forward in that area, and our council was pleased to support this being here in View Royal."

Quick Facts:

- The therapeutic recovery community movement was founded on the principles of respect for life, oneself, others and the environment. It operates free-of-charge to all residents.
- The San Patrignano Therapeutic Community in Italy is the model for Our Place Society’s therapeutic recovery community, and reports a 72% full-recovery rate for residents who complete the program.
- In the therapeutic recovery community model, work is used both for therapy and education. A structured and meaningful work schedule helps to shape behaviour, create a sense of membership, teach job skills and instil attitudes that promote competence.
- The evidence-based therapeutic recovery community model’s primary approach to treatment is the community as healer versus individual focus.

- Treatment activities emphasize learning and doing, rather than getting therapy.
- By using a community-as-method approach, all members have a responsibility to hold both themselves and others accountable, and to learn how to embrace pro-social behaviours and relationships.

Learn More:

To learn more about Our Place Society's therapeutic recovery community, visit:

<https://www.ourplacesociety.com/how-we-help/therapeutic-recovery-community>

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