
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health Services
Vancouver Island Health Authority

NEW DETOX BEDS INCREASE ACCESS TO ADDICTION TREATMENT

VICTORIA – Adults struggling with substance addictions now have more access to treatment with the addition of 21 new community medical detox and stabilization beds in Greater Victoria, announced Health Services Minister George Abbott today.

“The addition of these new beds will more than double the number of detox and stabilization beds available in the capital city area,” said Abbott. “These beds will be closely linked to physicians and community agencies to improve access to treatment, reflecting government’s commitment to an integrated approach for addictions services in communities.”

“Drug or alcohol addiction is a difficult affliction to overcome,” said Oak Bay-Gordon Head MLA Ida Chong. “In Greater Victoria, there are a number of addictions services provided through VIHA to suit individual patient needs. Detox from substances through programs like community medical detox, outpatient detox, or stabilization may be required before individuals can proceed to long-term treatment programs such as supportive recovery housing.”

The 21 new beds bring the total number of both community medical detox beds and stabilization beds in the Greater Victoria area to 38. Renovation of the new community medical detox unit at the Eric Martin Pavilion was completed last month. The new stabilization beds will be placed at the Pembroke Street Withdrawal Management Services Unit to help support people in early stages of recovery from alcohol and drugs. Admissions to both the new detox unit and Pembroke Street beds will start in February.

“The VIHA Board applauds the hard work and dedication of our addictions services staff and our community service partners,” said Jac Kreut, VIHA board chair. “They have worked diligently to make sure that this project will meet the needs of clients. The \$1.75-million investment in this project is part of VIHA’s \$7.6 million in initiatives stemming from the Mayor’s Task Force on Homelessness.”

The Victoria Hospitals Foundation provided a \$60,000 donation for furnishings and other items for clients at the detox unit.

“The Victoria Hospitals Foundation is proud to support VIHA’s expansion of these important services for those struggling with addictions. A generous estate gift provided a lasting legacy to those working bravely to regain their health,” said Rob Cooke, chair, Victoria Hospitals Foundation.

Community medical detoxification beds are for clients who suffer from severe addictions where withdrawal symptoms from substances could pose serious health risks. Detox is short-term care that lasts about one week, during which clients receive medical supervision and round-the-clock monitoring while they withdraw.

VIHA operates a total of 68 beds for adult addictions treatment in Greater Victoria including community medical detox, stabilization, sobering, and supportive recovery/residential treatment. For more information on these services, please visit: <http://www.viha.ca/mhas/services>.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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BACKGROUND

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GREATER VICTORIA ADULT ADDICTION SERVICES

The Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) is committed to ensure that appropriate health care supports are in place to help people overcome addiction to drugs and alcohol. VIHA's investment of \$1.75 million to add 21 new community medical detox and stabilization beds will increase access to care for adults who suffer from severe addiction.

Although many people choose to stop or control their use of drugs or alcohol on their own, a formalized detox program can increase the success of long-term recovery. Therefore, VIHA offers a broad range of treatment options for adults with addictions, including:

- Victoria Sobering and Assessment Centre – a 20-bed facility that offers safe shelter for clients who are under the influence of either alcohol or drugs.
- Eric Martin Pavilion (EMP) Community Medical Detox Unit – a 21-bed short-stay unit (up to 10 days) for those at high risk of severe physical complications from their withdrawal symptoms. The program provides 24-hour medical supervision with physician and nursing support, evaluation, withdrawal management and individualized treatment planning.
- Pembroke Street Withdrawal Management Services Unit – 17 stabilization beds for medium-term stay (28 days) following detox. Provides withdrawal services such as support group work, individual support, and reconnection to community resources including income assistance.
- Supportive Recovery/Residential Treatment (The Grove with five beds for men, and Holly House with five beds for women) – for stable clients who have completed detox and do not have withdrawal symptoms. Clients can stay up to three months in a residential and abstinence-based setting for extra support and counselling in their recovery.
- Outpatient Detox – a six-week program with daily group work for individuals with mild to moderate dependency/withdrawal symptoms who have high motivation to change, and are ready to develop social skills required for a support network or self-help groups.
- Adult Addictions Community Treatment Program (Quadra Clinic) – provides group work and one-to-one sessions for up to one year for adults with drug and alcohol problems.

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