

Mental Health & Substance Use Update



Parksville City Council approved a new Treatment centre!

Parksville City Council has agreed to move ahead with a new **19-bed addictions treatment centre**. A former seniors' care home located at 188 McCarter Street, the facility has been empty for some time. Following the final bylaw adoption, this facility will offer a 90-day, voluntary-only **program for people above 19 years old** living on Vancouver Island. The new Treatment Centre will be a significant addition to the continuum of recovery-focused substance use services, particularly on the Central and North Island.

Please check out the following links:

<https://www.pqbnews.com/local-news/addictions-treatment-centre-gets-third-reading-from-parksville-council-7118609>

<https://www.timescolonist.com/local-news/parksville-approves-rezoning-for-treatment-centre-7924307>

Introducing Victoria's new Safe Inhalation Site

People who inhale illicit drugs now have access to a **permanent indoor inhalation overdose prevention service** in downtown Victoria. This new service is co-located at 941 Pandora Avenue within The Harbour, Victoria's safer consumption site. This is the **first of its size and to be a fully enclosed indoor inhalation site within North America!** People are also able to easily access other health care services, such as counselling and treatment as part of the participation of a larger Wellness and Recovery Centre service model.

[Click here to learn more!](#)



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Changing Faces

Sheila Leadbetter has retired after a 37 year career at Island Health. With a background in nursing, Sheila's dedication to serving every patient or client who comes through Island Health's doors was unprecedented. We wish her well in this next chapter of her life.

Please welcome and congratulate our ***four new directors***, though you may recognize them already:

Lisa Murphy: Clinical Services, Nanaimo Acute/Community, and Oceanside

Monica Flexhaug: Strategy, Priority Partnerships and Operational Initiatives

Melanee Szafron: Clinical Services for South Island Community

Tasha Mckelvey: Clinical Director for Mental Health and Substance Use

Monthly Highlights

We often struggle to know what is the more **culturally appropriate language** to be using in our conversations and documents. **Len Pierre** provides excellent guidance in the following webinar

https://youtu.be/anCfk9ilof8?si=EJfr_N1-ChZycjmc

Strategic Plan Tour Update

Sheila Leadbetter (ED), Dr. Wei Song (EMD), and Dr. Ash Heaslip (EMD) greatly appreciated speaking with and learning from all the programs across Island Health this past fall. Those conversations have confirmed the direction of the MHSU 2023-2025 Strategic Plan!



What's Next?

- Update the plan with some of the fresh information we recovered
- Produce an annual report highlighting the *many* achievements in 22/23
- Create new tools to assert that teams understand the strategic direction and how it applies to the work we do
- New initiatives will be announced in communities to drive outstanding objectives forward.

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New Intensive Program for Youth with Mental Health Concerns

The **Adolescent Intensive Day Treatment Program (AIDTP)** is for youth aged 14 to 18 years old who have complex mental health issues who may also struggle with school participation and life skills. This program focuses on supporting youth to improve their mental health and well-being, and to strengthen their relationships with their parents/caregivers, and peers. This **program is strengths-based, trauma informed, focused on recovery and resiliency.**

The program specifically focuses on supporting youth and their support network to set goals related to:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Interpersonal Difficulties
- Complex Trauma
- Emotional Dysregulation
- Chronic Suicidality
- Non-Suicidal Self Injury (NSSI)

At AIDTP, an interdisciplinary team of experienced, professional staff provide youth and their families/caregivers with specialized care to address areas of their life that have been impacted by mental health issues.

The program is **tertiary – emergent, not an urgent program, and the program is voluntary.** This means that youth cannot be mandated to attend. Program groups/cohorts will run for a duration of 5 months at a time from September- January and from February –June. Youth are expected to attend the program everyday Monday – Friday (9:00am -3:30 pm), with the exception of Wednesday’s, when the program ends at 1:30pm. There will approximately 10 youth in every group/cohort. For further details, visit: [New Intensive Day Program Opens for Youth with Mental Health Concerns | Island Health.](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

WE HAVE MORE ACCESS TO FREE COUNSELLING:

MHSU has partnered up with 11 counselling organizations across the island to enhance access to **FREE in person and virtual counselling for individuals** with mild to moderate needs. Referrals can be made through your local MHSU intake office, that you can locate [here.](#)

