

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE ADDICTION RECOVERY PROGRAM AT CENTRAL CITY LODGE AS OF June 24, 2014

Since April 1, 2013 we have initiated several significant improvements in our service by increasing our programming and providing additional professional development for our staff. Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) has also contributed to the improvements. Our 90 day residential program is licensed for 22 adult men and meets provincial standards for Adult Residential Substance Use Services. The program is funded by VCH, the Ministry of Social Development and user fees.

We enhanced our programming by modifying and offering programs in house. We successfully piloted the Living Life to the Full as a supplement to our regular programming. The course offers simple tools based on cognitive behavioural principles to improve mental health and wellness. Our Manager attended the training at the Canadian Mental Health Association and then revised the material to make it suitable for our residents. In order to make this pilot a regular part of our programming, we are seeking funding to train two more staff members and purchase booklets that are an essential part of the copy righted program.

The second initiative was modifying the Seeking Safety program which helps residents deal with trauma and substance use. Our twelve week program was adapted specifically to meet the needs of our population. We address symptoms of past trauma that impact our residents today. Because trauma-based issues can arise, the program is lead by a Masters level counselor. Our Manager and a UBC Masters of Social Work student led the program. In the future we are hoping that a VCH counselor will be able to offer this service.

We initiated a mentoring program so that men who have been in the program longer assist other men joining the program. The more senior men help the others settle and provide ongoing support and information.

This year our residents became eligible to enroll in the Vancouver Addictions Matrix Program (VAMP). VCH now allows our residents, who choose to enroll in this program, to stay in our program for another month in order to complete VAMP. VAMP, a 16 week outpatient stimulant addiction treatment program, is a month longer than our 90 day program. VAMP offers group treatment along with individual counseling sessions.

Our residents have also benefitted from staff participating in an extensive professional development program. Addiction courses ranged from VCH's 3 day Core Addiction Practice, to the Tri-City Addiction Conference, to UBC's courses on Advanced Motivational Interviewing. Staff also attended courses on medication management, "bullying and harassment", LGBT support, and addiction housing. Additionally, the manager participated in courses on Managing the Discipline and Selection Process at the Health Employers Association of BC.

Many external changes have impacted the administration of our program. When the new contract between Vancouver Coastal Health and Central City Lodge started on April 1, 2013, VCH assumed responsibility for admitting residents into CCL. For the year ending March 31, 2014 our occupancy rate was 93%. The most common age range of men admitted to the program is 30-49 accounting for 59% of our residents. Most of our residents would be in the early stages of recovery and are marginally housed before entering the program. Over time we have worked with VCH to determine the best placements for residents who generally are from the Downtown Eastside and have many challenges.

VCH is also providing a Registered Nurse for 4 hours per week and arranged for an Addiction Doctor to provide care. The addition of the nurse and doctor has improved the health care of our residents who may have complex physical and/or mental health issues in addition to the addiction use issue. VCH also provided funding for urine tests to ensure that our program remains abstinence based. VCH has recently undergone several staffing changes in positions that work with CCL staff.

The Manager and the Executive Director submitted three proposals in response to VCH's request for proposals for the redesign of the Downtown Eastside. One proposal was to move and expand the Addiction Recovery Program to a new site and convert the existing space into more complex residential care beds similar to the program offered in the rest of CCL. The expanded Addictions Program would also house persons who have completed our Addiction Recovery Program and who need additional support in an abstinence-based building.