

# ATTACHMENT C

## Part 1 of 2



2021-FEB-12

Via Email: [sheila.leadbetter@viha.ca](mailto:sheila.leadbetter@viha.ca)

Sheila Leadbetter, Executive Director  
Island Health  
1952 Bay Street  
Victoria BC V8R 1J8

Dear Sheila:

**RE: TEMPORARY HOUSING SITES IN NANAIMO**

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This letter is in response to recent direction from City of Nanaimo Council and the ongoing homelessness that we are experiencing in our community. As you are well aware, the City of Nanaimo, BC Housing and Island Health have worked collaboratively on supporting existing and proposed supportive housing projects in the Community. We are also thankful the Province and BC Housing have selected Nanaimo as a location for the second Navigation Centre in B.C. and look forward to working with you and your team to ensure the success of this project.

While we remain positive that these existing commitments and investments will help address the problem, there are, as you know, many people in our community who are experiencing homelessness today.

The City is aware that communities around the Province are considering different models to address this complex problem, including a recent initiative in Cowichan to provide small cabin spaces in managed clusters. In response to the above-noted challenges, Council has directed staff investigate this housing model, and at their recent meeting of 2021-FEB-01, unanimously passed the following motion:

"It was moved and seconded that a report be prepared as quickly as possible outlining options for implementing a temporary emergency accommodation program, similar to the Cowichan Housing model, in Nanaimo and the report include:

1. The capital costs for 2-3 pilot locations and potential funding sources;
2. The estimated monthly operation costs, potential funding sources, and potential operators; and
3. Any opportunities for community collaboration and comment from appropriate City departments, the RCMP and community agencies."

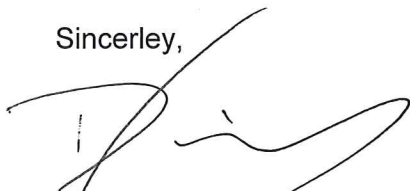
We understand that Federal Reaching Home Funds have been used to construct the temporary units in Cowichan, and that BC housing has provided operating funds to support these sites.

Based on the above, we would request Island Health's comments with respect to the establishment of similar temporary housing sites in Nanaimo. In order to respond to Council's direction, we would appreciate your response to the following questions:

- A. What is Island Health's position with respect to the establishment of temporary emergency accommodation, similar to sites underway in Cowichan?
- B. Does Island Health have the ability to support 2-3 temporary emergency sites in Nanaimo?

We thank you in advance for your response. If you have any questions or if you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (250) 755-4493 or [dale.lindsay@nanaimo.ca](mailto:dale.lindsay@nanaimo.ca).

Sincerley,



Dale Lindsay, MCIP  
General Manager  
**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

DL/kb/mr

cc: Dana Leik, Via Email: [dana.leik@viha.ca](mailto:dana.leik@viha.ca)  
Jake Rudolph, CAO, City of Nanaimo  
Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development  
Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning

# ATTACHMENT C

## Part 2 of 2

Excellent health and care for everyone,  
everywhere, every time.



April 15, 2021

Ref 20956

Dale Lindsay  
General Manager  
Development Services  
City of Nanaimo

Email: [dale.lindsay@nanaimo.ca](mailto:dale.lindsay@nanaimo.ca)

Dear Mr. Lindsay,

Thank you for your letter dated February 12, 2021 regarding temporary housing sites in Nanaimo. Please accept my apology for the delay in my response.

Island Health is pleased to partner with local governments, including the City of Nanaimo, BC Housing and other community agencies to provide health care services for individuals experiencing homelessness and housing-vulnerability.

As previously discussed, Island Health views ourselves as a key partner in the work supporting the wellness and health needs of homeless individuals and those in temporary and supportive housing sites. We share the commitment, and recognize the importance of, the 'housing first' approach. We rely on entities and agencies whose primary mandate is housing to establish housing sites and operate on-site facility and social supports. In this context, Island Health is committed to providing in-reach, on-site health care services on a visitational basis in alignment with the health care needs of building residents. This approach to health care service delivery has been, and remains, in place, including at the Terminal, Labieux and Prideaux sites.

I am pleased to attach an overview of Island Health's health care service approach for underserved populations in supportive housing. This document has previously been shared with City staff and community members, with the aim to provide information about services and the service continuum for vulnerable populations.

Island Health and BC Housing are nearing completion of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which will formalize a shared understanding of the health care services and service delivery approach at the existing sites, at future supportive housing sites, and at the Navigation Centre. We anticipate this MoU will be signed in the coming weeks.

Finally, you have asked two specific questions which I am pleased to answer in anticipation this will support the City's ongoing planning around supportive housing.

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### Island Health

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[islandhealth.ca](http://islandhealth.ca)

With respect to your question about Island Health's position on the establishment of temporary accommodation such as what is underway in Cowichan; Island Health strongly encourages public agencies, local governments, community organizations, and the private sector to develop innovative solutions to housing, both temporary and permanent. We will work with housing providers to support access to health care services for residents as outlined above.

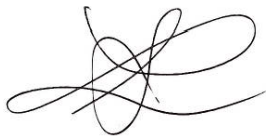
Your second question relates to Island Health's ability to support additional temporary sites in Nanaimo. Island Health is mandated to provide health care services to its population and as described above, is committed to providing health care services on an in-reach/visitation basis reflective of the needs of the residents. We do note that Island Health may be challenged to fully meet the health care needs at additional, net new sites without additional resources. Prioritization may have to occur based on urgency and complexity of needs. Human resources is an ongoing challenge in the health sector, particularly as it relates to nursing and mental health and substance use clinicians. While recruitment is ongoing, there is a shortage in many health care disciplines. As individuals access housing and become more stable, their health care needs do change, which allows for flexibility in service provision.

Island Health recommends an experienced, reputable service provider be responsible for the intake and access processes for this housing, and also be responsible for the day-to-day operations and security provisions, if required, for any new site, whether that site be a BC Housing or City of Nanaimo led service. Island Health will work with the service provider to assess the health needs of clients and provide appropriate health care services based on that needs assessment.

Over the past year, the pandemic has provided new opportunities for cross-sectoral partnerships and innovative service approaches. Island Health recognizes, and is grateful, for the commitment and partnership of the Province, the City of Nanaimo, and local public and not-for-profit agencies as we work together to address the societal issues of poverty, mental health, addictions, and homelessness.

I look forward to our continued work together. Thank you again for reaching out to me Dale. On behalf of the MSHU leadership team and front line staff, we look forward to working alongside the City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sheila Leadbetter', with a stylized, cursive script.

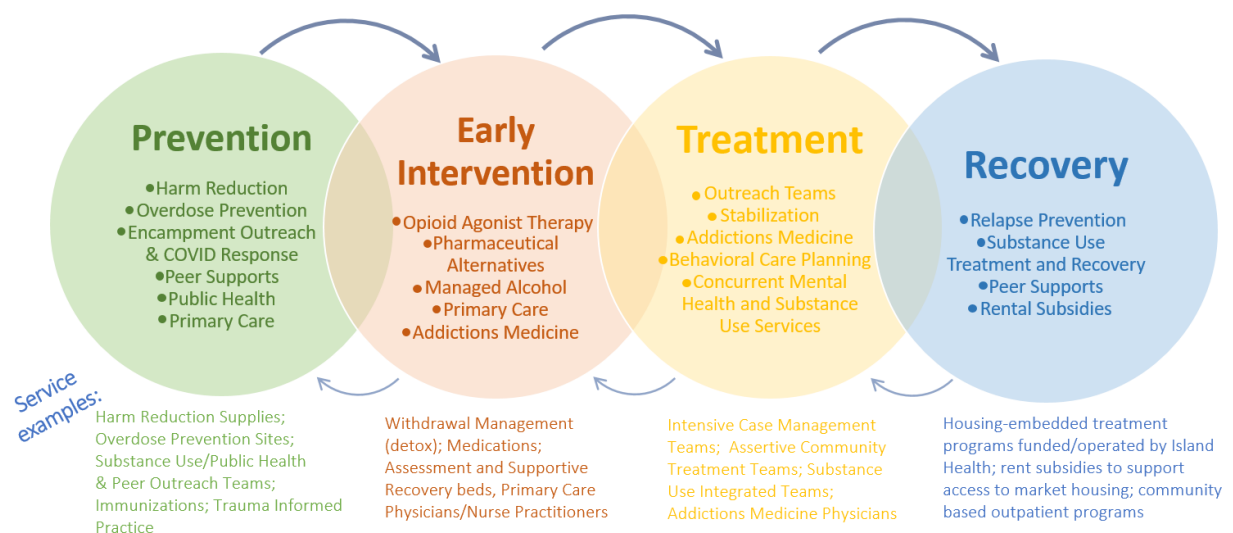
Sheila Leadbetter  
Executive Director, Nanaimo and CI/NI MHSU Operations  
Island Health



February 2021

## Nanaimo Supportive Housing Sites – Health Services Overview

- Island Health has provided onsite health services on an in-reach (visitation) basis at the Nanaimo supportive housing sites since they opened in 2018.
- The goal is to stabilize health and housing for individuals with serious and persistent mental health challenges and/or problematic substance use.
- The aim of providing health care services is to:
  - build relationships and trust with clients and residents;
  - deliver primary care services as needed in support of prevention and wellness;
  - provide on-site mental health and substance use services to improve wellness and mitigate harm and risk; and,
  - enable linkages and referrals to health care services and mental health and substance use services as needed and desired.
- A range of health services are available depending on the clients' individual needs and their personal wellness goals:



- Health care services are voluntary and dependent on clients' interest and willingness to engage and receive supports.

## Supportive Housing Health Services – Nanaimo

- On-site regular supports vary depending on the site and needs of the population but may include:
  - Primary Care Outreach: Mobile team of nurses, peers and primary care physicians. Offers a range of primary care services, wound care, harm reduction, sexual health, chronic health (e.g. asthma; diabetes), referrals to diagnostics and other services.
  - Mental Health and Substance Use (MHSU): On-site at regular times and days; services include consultation and referral to appropriate service providers and/or connection to other MHSU services.
- Additional MHSU in-reach supports which may be accessed include on-site visits as needed for specific clients who have been assessed and attached to a specialized team based on their clinical requirements. These teams include:
  - Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) - Treatment and support for adults experiencing serious mental illness and/or substance use challenges with significant impairment in functioning, requiring wrap-around clinical support.
  - Community Support Services (CST) - Outreach services for adults with complex recovery needs as a result of co-occurring serious mental illness and/or chemical dependency.
  - Community Outreach Response (COR) - Mobile service providing community- based crisis response services including street-based outreach.
  - Substance Use Services Outreach (SUSO) - Mobile support for individuals seeking supports around substance, including harm reduction, access to Opioid Agonist Therapy, referrals to treatment, withdrawal management, supportive recovery and stabilization.

In addition to on-site and in-reach health care services, a range of MHSU services are available in other community settings in Nanaimo. Access may be dependent on available capacity and resources, which can vary. Services include:

- General Intake - for adults seeking MHSU services; walk-ins Monday-Friday 10:00 am to 6:15 pm; or by phone 250-739-5710.
- Counselling Services:
  - Walk-in Crisis Counselling Clinic - Walk-in single session crisis counselling offered to all ages free of charge.
  - Substance Use and Mental Health Counselling Services - Includes group therapy options, individual counselling, treatment referrals.
- Partners in Parenting - Outreach support for individuals with substance use issues who are pregnant or parenting at least one child under the age of 12.
- Clearview Detox - Acute service that supports individuals through medical withdrawal from alcohol and opioids (7-10 day length of stay).
- Overdose Prevention Site - for adults seeking safe and supported environment for injection of their substances.
- Sobering Assessment Centre - 24/7 access to safe supportive beds for adults under the influence of substances who are seeking sleep/rest.
- Supportive Recovery & Stabilization Beds - Short term residential placement to strengthen and further recovery from substance use.