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Interior Health prepares to open first complex care homes in Kamloops and Kelowna

Kamloops/Kelowna – Interior Health (IH) and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions are preparing to open the first complex care housing locations in Kamloops and Kelowna in the weeks ahead.

Complex care housing has on-site health care and social supports designed for people who live with significant mental health and addiction and or medical challenges that result in difficulty finding and maintaining housing. Complex care housing in Kamloops and Kelowna will have 24/7 staff who support residents with comprehensive, person-centred services to meet their needs.

“Everyone deserves a home where they can feel safe and live with dignity,” said Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. “Complex care housing services opening in Kamloops and Kelowna mean that people with complex mental health and substance use challenges will be able to access housing or maintain their existing housing with additional supports tailored to their individual needs.”

Across the province, complex care housing is being implemented in a range of housing types. Interior Health is implementing a model in Kelowna and Kamloops that will see smaller locations with five to eight suites.

Interior Health will provide a range of health-care services on site including nursing, occupational therapy and social work. An IH cultural worker (Indigenous) and a peer support worker will join the teams to provide support from a lived experience perspective and offer further supports once the homes are up and running. Access to additional primary care resources will also be in place to ensure residents have access to ongoing general care.

“The Complex Care model is new to our region and a first step towards improving the overall health and well-being of vulnerable individuals in Kelowna and Kamloops. This new service ensures residents have direct and ongoing access to services and supports from health teams who know their needs,” said Susan Brown, IH president and CEO.

A contracted provider, Active Care Youth and Adult Services, will provide life skills training and support, which may include training in activities of daily living for things such as cooking, cleaning and shopping, psychosocial rehabilitation and education, preparation for independent living and support to access education and employment.

“Active Care Youth and Adult Services is honoured to partner with Interior Health offering a new pathway out of homelessness. Complex Care is an exciting new initiative to support those who have multiple complex care needs, by providing a home with wrap-around therapeutic supports to help transform lives and, by extension, our community,” said Julie Pariseau, Active Care executive director.

We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.

Interior Health and Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions have committed to 20 total complex care spaces in each community.

Individual placements will be staggered to ensure each new resident has time to become familiar with their surroundings and the care teams supporting them.

Quotes:

Tom Dyas, Mayor of Kelowna

"The opening of new complex care spaces in Kelowna is a small step in the right direction to help some of our most vulnerable citizens dealing with overlapping conditions including mental health and addictions. The City of Kelowna and our neighbouring local government partners have advocated for this type of program for some time and while this is welcome news, the need in Kelowna and the Okanagan region for this type of housing and care is significant."

Reid Hamer-Jackson, Mayor of Kamloops

"The City of Kamloops is excited to see these doors open to support vulnerable members of our community with complex care needs. This is a pivotal step in the right direction and we look forward to continuing to work together with the province to tackle the health-care needs in Kamloops."

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