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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

### **Recovery program offers space for people to rebuild lives**

VICTORIA – People will be supported to move from a cycle of addiction, homelessness and incarceration, with greater opportunities to rebuild their lives with dignity and respect, at a new Victoria recovery centre.

The Government of British Columbia is providing \$4.7 million in funding to Our Place Society's Therapeutic Recovery Community (TRC) — a recovery-based program that is delivered in a structured environment. Therapeutic recovery communities, like the project being developed by Our Place Society, offer a safe space for people to learn new ways to strengthen themselves, rebuild their lives and address the root causes of their addiction.

“Our government is working to provide a full spectrum of connected and holistic mental health and addiction supports to help all British Columbians live happier, more fulfilling lives,” said Judy Darcy, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. “I am so proud to support this innovative, therapeutic recovery community, which will help people living with addiction develop the skills they need to thrive in our community.”

What makes this therapeutic recovery community unique is the active role clients will have in its operations. In a TRC, work is a key component. It is used both for therapy and education. Residents perform many of the jobs needed to keep the community going. A structured and meaningful work schedule helps to shape behaviour, create a sense of membership, teach job skills and instil attitudes that promote competence.

Our Place Society will work with partners to ensure program supports are culturally appropriate and safe, including holistic integration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous healing approaches that seek to achieve and sustain the well-being of all residents.

“We are grateful to the Government of B.C. for supporting this life-changing program,” said Don Evans, executive director of Our Place. “This is an opportunity to not only transform the lives of individuals, but to also transform our community.”

The proposed location for the therapeutic recovery community is the former youth custody centre at 94 Talcott Rd. in View Royal. To support this project, BC Housing will be leasing this property to Our Place Society at a nominal rate, providing a grant of approximately \$310,000 for site renovations, and covering property tax costs for the next three years.

“After playing an important role in helping more than 100 people transition to permanent housing, I'm excited that this building will be able to find a new role providing the housing future residents will need to focus on rebuilding their lives,” said Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. “By combining this stable housing with the necessary wraparound support services, this therapeutic recovery community will support people in their

recovery.”

The proposed therapeutic recovery community will begin accepting male clients in 2019–20 for between 12 and 24 months at a time. People may be referred to the program through the criminal justice system, or Our Place Society’s network of social-support service providers. All admissions to the TRC will be subject to a rigorous application and interview process, which will assess treatment readiness to ensure suitability for admission to the program. Counsellors, case managers, health-care professionals and social workers will guide clients through the program. Clients on medication for opioid-agonist therapy will receive appropriate supports through the program.

“The therapeutic community will be an important addition to the range of treatment options available on the South Island for people living with substance-use challenges,” said Dr. Ramm Hering, primary-care substance-use lead, Island Health. “Island Health is pleased to partner with Our Place Society, and support evidence-based, holistic clinical services at the therapeutic community that will help clients’ recovery.”

The Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions will be working closely with Our Place Society on this project to determine the effectiveness and adaptability of the TRC model in other parts of the province. The goal of the TRC is for everyone who completes the program to be in control of their addiction, have a place to live, a job and all the life skills necessary to thrive in the wider community.

Our Place Society is a non-profit organization with extensive knowledge and experience helping people in need in Greater Victoria access the mental health, addiction, housing and social service supports they need, when they need them. They also work closely with partner agencies, such as BC Housing, Island Health and other not-for-profit community service agencies.

#### **Quick Facts:**

- The TRC movement was founded on the principles of respect for life, oneself, others, and the environment, and operate free of charge to all clients.
- The San Patrignano Therapeutic Community in Italy is the model for Our Place Society’s therapeutic recovery community, and reports a 72% full recovery rate for residents who complete the program.
- The evidence-based TRC model’s primary approach to treatment is the community as healer, versus individual focus.
- Treatment activities emphasize learning and doing, rather than getting therapy.
- By using a community-as-method approach, all clients have a responsibility to hold both themselves and others accountable, and to learn how to embrace pro-social behaviours and relationships.

#### **Learn More:**

To learn more about Our Place Society’s therapeutic recovery community, visit:

<https://www.ourplacesociety.com/how-we-help/therapeutic-recovery-community>

**Contact:**

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